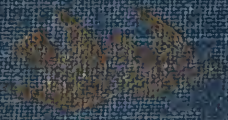
WHEN THOUGHTS WILL SOAR



BERTHA VON SUTTNER

Sarah J. Morton Wood

from daughter—

Genevieve Wood Magee

August 1914

11 A.

WHEN THOUGHTS WILL SOAR

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WHEN THOUGHTS WILL SOAR

A Romance of the Immediate Future

BY

BARONESS BERTHA VON SUTTNER

Author of "Lay down your Arms"

TRANSLATED BY

NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

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CONTENTS

	PRELUDE	3
I.	FRANKA GARLETT	6
II.	CHLODWIG HELMER	31
III.	FRANKA'S NEW HOME	39
IV.	LIFE IN SIELENBURG CASTLE	46
	INTERMEZZO	63
V.	COUNT SIELEN'S WILL	68
VI.	A SECOND ANONYMOUS MESSAGE	82
VII.	FRANKA'S SALON	98
VIII.	THE OUTLINES OF A GREAT PLAN	112
IX.	FRANKA'S DÉBUT AND CAREER	122
X.	AT LUCERNE	139
XI.	AN EVENING IN THE ROSE-PALACE	152
XII.	MR. TOKER'S ILLUSTRIOUS GUESTS	165
XIII.	A LUNCHEON PARTY	177
XIV.	DREAMS OF LOVE	187
XV.	RINOTTI AND PRINCE VICTOR ADOLPH	198
XVI.	THE SIELENBURG PARTY	209
XVII.	THE OPENING NIGHT	218
XVIII.	FRANKA'S LECTURE	233
XIX.	YE YOUNG MAIDENS, LISTEN TO ME	243
XX.	ANOTHER LETTER FROM CHLODWIG HELMER	257
XXI.	NEW WONDERS	271

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CONTENTS

XXII. Chlodwig Helmer's Lecture: the Conquest of the Air 288
XXIII. A Cozy Supper 311
XXIV. Sundry Conversations 323
XXV. Scenes of Beauty and of Love 352
XXVI. Clouds on the Horizon 365
XXVII. Speeches and Letters 378
XXVIII. A Cornucopia full of Gifts 399
XXIX. Franka decides her Fate 415
Finale 435

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PRELUDE

Mr. John A. Toker, the American multimillionaire, flung down his newspaper in some excitement and became lost in thought.

The paragraph that had so agitated him read: —

"The sovereign expressed to Count Zeppelin his regret at being unable on this occasion to see the airship which, he was convinced, was destined to furnish the weapon of the heights in future wars."

For more than an hour the little old gentleman remained absorbed in his reflections; then he seized pen and paper and made various notes. He was evidently drafting a rather complicated plan. He now and again ran his pen through what he had written and substituted other words. One sheet was filled with a list of names — the names of distinguished contemporaries; another with figures, apparently a schedule of estimated expenses, in which the individual items for the most part had five or six numerals.

Even after an hour the plan was not as yet near completion, but Mr. Toker was compelled to interrupt his labors in order to take up with other demands of the day. One of his secretaries, who had made a careful preliminary sifting of the letters and

dispatches brought by the morning's mail, came with such as he had found important enough to be called to his master's attention.

Mr. Toker dictated various answers. When this correspondence was cleared away, a host of other affairs required his consideration: — business connected with the management of his property; reports from the many concerns in which he was interested; audiences with the foremen of his enormous landed estate, his farmers and agents. Moreover, the guests at the castle and the members of his family could not be neglected, and sport and exercise were necessary to maintain his physical elasticity, while for the satisfaction of his intellectual cravings reading in many fields had to be provided for — indeed, the multimillionaire frequently found it exasperating to realize that one man might be richer than others in money, but not in time; one may have thousands of dollars to spend every hour, but not more than sixteen waking hours to spend in a day.

"Money is a great help in accomplishing big things," Mr. Toker used to say with a sigh, "but mostly those things require much time, and in this respect I feel that I am a very poor fellow."

Several weeks passed without the American Crœsus being able to proceed with the elaboration of his project. But he carried round with him the idea that lay at the foundation of it. In his mind one thought gave birth to another; visions arose without any definite outlines; suggestions flashed through his brain, but served only as reminders of things that might later become clear.

When he again took up the notes that he had made, he canceled several names from the list and added new ones. It was a varied assortment of from thirty to forty of his contemporaries: Björnson, Maurice Maeterlinck, Eleanora Duse, Elihu Root, the American statesman; Madame Curie, the discoverer of radium; Nansen, the Arctic explorer; Prince Albert of Monaco, the oceanographic scientist; Tolstoï, Marconi, and many great men from the scientific world, who had won distinction as pathfinders in the domain of philosophy, sociology, history, and natural science.

He also went over the sheet with the numbers, and added a cipher in many cases. Thus, for example, the item of "Roses," which had been set down at ten thousand francs, he increased to a hundred thousand. Moreover, the word "roses" frequently appeared in his notes, and the thought of those queenly flowers seemed especially to impress itself on his mind, for the pencilings which he made on the edge of the paper, as he strove to catch an idea, portrayed very clearly, even if inartistically, the forms of roses and rosebuds.

One sheet was filled with catchwords the meaning of which to one uninitiated would have been scarcely comprehensible: as, for instance, "Concentration and accumulation of forces. Motion through explosions. Agglomeration of scattered atoms. Energy radiating in all directions. Roses, roses . . . the Power of Beauty. Subjugation of the forces of Nature. High flying. Revelations. New lights, new tones, new thoughts, moss roses . . ."

CHAPTER I

FRANKA GARLETT

A YOUNG girl stepped out of the gate of the Central Cemetery of Vienna. For almost eight weeks she had been going there to lay a few flowers on her father's grave. That dearly beloved parent had been her only stay in this world, and he had been so unexpectedly and prematurely snatched away from her! Frank Garlett had reached only the age of forty-five. His sudden death had resulted from an accident: he had fallen from the running-board of a tram-car, had rolled under the wheels, and, severely injured, had been brought to his dwelling by the Rescue Society, and there a few hours later he had breathed his last in the arms of his daughter, who was half-crazed with terror and grief.

Franka walked slowly and wearily home from the cemetery. Her lodgings, her empty, orphaned lodgings, were not far distant. Behind her, with steps equally slow, strode a man who had caught sight of her at the cemetery gate, and, dazzled by her brilliant youthful beauty, which betrayed itself in spite of her paleness and the traces of tears, was now following her for the purpose of discovering who she was. He was an elderly man of distinguished appearance.

As Franka entered the front door, he also paused there, but did not venture to address her. He

merely went to the porter's door and rang the bell. A buxom woman came out and greeted him: —

"What is it you wish?"

"I should like to make an inquiry; please allow me to come in."

The woman moved aside and allowed the stranger to pass in. He sat down in an armchair, took out of his pocket his portemonnaie, and handed the woman a ten-crown note.

"Tell me, who the young lady is who just entered this house, dressed in deep mourning. And give me all the information you can about her."

"Oh, she? . . . She's a Miss Garlett — yes, a pretty lass, but a poor little body! Her father died not long ago, and now she's all alone. . . . She was almost beside herself with grief when they took him away. Now she's a bit calmer. Every day she goes out and visits him in the graveyard, but otherwise she never goes out and no one comes to see her. And no one came to see them when the old gentleman — in fact, he was not old — was alive. You see he met with an accident — fell off the electric. When they brought him in . . ."

"Who and what was Mr. Garlett?" asked the other, interrupting her.

"A professor, or a philosopher, or something like that. He gave lessons. That was how he earned their living, I reckon. I'd like to know what the poor little lass will have to live on now. The rent is soon due, and it was always a hard pull to pay the rent. . . . The two had to be mighty thrifty. They had only one old woman who used to come in every

day to help, and they only nibbled — like sparrows. But books! their rooms were just piled up with 'em! He must have been a real bookworm, the poor gentleman! and the little one used to be reading all the time, too. . . . The only luxury they ever allowed themselves was to go three or four times a month to the fourth gallery of the opera house or to the Burg Theater. But they were n't never down in the mouth, neither of 'em, in spite of all the worry and their little money; on the contrary, they were as gay as larks — especially the lassie. We always heard her laughing and singing in her room, though outside, to be sure, she was always serious and, so to say, a bit haughty; perhaps she inherited a bit of haughtiness from her departed mamma."

"Was Mr. Garlett a widower, and how long had he been?"

"Oh, for fifteen years or so. That was quite a romance. His wife was a count's daughter, it seems. He had been private tutor to her brother at a castle: the young lady fell in love with him — he was a handsome fellow — indeed, he was. They eloped and were married. The parents — mighty stuck-up folks they was — was furious and put a curse on their daughter."

"Ah, my dear lady, that only happens in old-fashioned novels: parents cursing their children."

"I don't know nothing about these things, but this much I know, they would n't have anything more to do with her; never gave her no money, sent back all her letters, and the dainty young lady, who all her life had ridden in kerridges and had her

pony and ate nothin' but cakes and ice cream, and al'ays had noblemen dancing attendance on her, — for she was heiress to a great estate and was as pretty as a picture, — just like her daughter, so folks says, — well, she could n't stand poverty and living among common people, and so she just up and died when her little girl was only five years old."

The stranger arose. "I thank you; I have all the information I wish."

Franka climbed the stairs up to her rooms, which were situated on the fourth story. Painfully, clinging to the banister, often pausing to get her breath, which always seemed to die away in a trembling sigh, she made her way up. The deepest sigh she drew as she opened the door and entered the anteroom. The anteroom? Really the kitchen; but the kitchen hearth was hidden by a screen. The place was rather dark and chilly. It was April, and the weather was still pretty cold.

Franka passed through this place and pushed open the door of a front room: her bedroom. Here it was brighter and more comfortable. The furnishings were to the last degree simple, not to say shabby, and yet a certain something in the arrangement of the furniture, in the articles and trinkets disposed on the tables and the walls, betrayed a taste for elegance.

She laid aside her hat and cloak and opened the door into the adjacent room, which had served her and her departed father as sitting-room and dining-

room, as study- and music-room. The door leading into still another contiguous chamber was closed. That was the room where Garlett had slept and dressed, and where he had died. Franka glanced into it — as she always did when she returned, as if to give a mute greeting to the place where she had last seen the beloved form of the departed, cold in death; then she softly closed the door again with a reverent gesture, crossed the sitting-room, and stretched herself out on the sofa with a long-drawn sigh — half lamentation, half ease.

She was so weary, so weary in body and soul at this moment, that the goad of her grief began to vanish from her consciousness, and she experienced only a kind of over-saturation of pain and a keen sense of yearning for rest. She drew over her chilly limbs the skin rug that lay on the sofa and banished all thought and feeling; she wished only to breathe and rest.

She was not sleepy; her eyes remained wide open, and she saw the rows of books which on the opposite wall reached from the floor to the ceiling. She saw her piano which had been silent and neglected for weeks. She saw her writing-desk which stood by the window, and the great center-table heaped with many folios. Gradually it began to grow darker, and through the window panes fell the glare from a row of brightly lighted windows of the house opposite. Up there was a printing establishment. The muffled rumble of the rotary presses also came to her ears. From the apartment on the floor below penetrated the staccato strumming of a too familiar opera-

waltz — repeated with obstinate pertinacity — detestable sounds! Oh, if one could but hear the musical tinkle of a brook or the call of the cuckoo!

An overmastering love for nature, for its perfumes and voices, for its green vistas and golden gleams, had ever been one of Franka's strongest passions — an unfortunate passion, for the crushing struggle for existence had enchained father and daughter almost exclusively to the narrow streets of the suburbs, and very rarely had opportunities been given for them to get glimpses of the splendors of free nature.

Nevertheless, this young girl's mental life had not been narrow. She had ventured to gaze off over wide horizons, up to sublime heights, into mysterious depths, in a manner seldom afforded to young persons of her age and sex. Her father had been an investigator, a scientist, a thinker, and a poet, and he had made the child his comrade. She was no bluestocking, thank Heaven — from that she was safeguarded by her temperament, by her inborn charm; besides, he had spared her all the dry details of science, all the rubbishy accumulations of accuracy, endeavoring rather to disclose to her only the blossoms of the wonders of science, of the intellect and of arts. But of life itself she had enjoyed extraordinarily little: no travel, no experiences, no love-affairs (she had been far too rigorously and jealously guarded against anything of that sort), no passions: — none of these things had penetrated into the monotony and loneliness of her existence. All the more, therefore, in place of these came visions, hopes, air-castles, confident expectations that the

future concealed in its folds some great good fortune in store for her, a good fortune in which above all others her beloved father would share. And instead of this, a great, an absolutely incomprehensible piece of evil fortune had come upon her: the sudden departure of her dearest and only friend, teacher, playmate, protector, her all-in-all.

In her present desolation the only persons who had interested themselves in her were an elderly couple who had rooms on the same floor — a retired major and his wife. When Mr. Garlett died, the major had taken upon himself to make all the arrangements for the funeral, and the major's wife had done her best to comfort and console the despairing girl.

The major had investigated the drawers in the writing-table to see if a will or anything else were to be found. There was no will, only a savings-bank book calling for several hundred gulden, and of course the only daughter inherited this: it was enough to cover the funeral expenses and to leave a small sum over. In a portfolio was a sealed letter with the direction, "In case of my death to be mailed." The address on it ran: —

To His Excellency
Count Eduard von Sielen,
Geheimer Rat, etc.,
Schloss Sielenburg,
Moravia.

This letter the major registered and mailed without letting Franka know anything about it, because in these first days she was so dazed that she really did not hear what was said to her.

It so happened that the major and his wife moved from Vienna to Graz, and Franka was now really alone. She realized that she was obliged to devise some means of earning her livelihood, and yet she had been putting off from day to day the effort of taking the first steps in this direction. The money in the bank was sufficient to allow her for a short time to lead her own life. But this respite was, indeed, brief, especially as the rent would be shortly due.

Franka was not thinking of this at all as she lay there in the twilight and gave herself up to the sense of restfulness that was coming over her. Gradually this absence of thought, between sleeping and waking, transformed itself into a pleasant half-dream. The waltz-rhythms from the neighbor's piano grew into a murmurous combination of organ tones and the distant roaring of the sea; the gleam of light from the printing-house opposite took on the prismatic colors of an electric fountain; and through her mind — or was it through her blood? — vividly flashed the consciousness, not expressed and not even formulated in thought: — "I am young, I am beautiful, I am alive . . ."

The next day Franka set out to look for a position. She thought she might become a companion or a reader or something of that sort. She applied at several employment bureaus. Her name was registered, the booking-fee was put into the cash-drawer, and then she was asked for references. She had none. The woman who had charge of one bureau

remarked: "You have one great fault: you are too young and too pretty."

The remark was to the point. Although she was more than twenty, Franka seemed scarcely eighteen. She was very tall and supple in figure; her big black eyes—though much weeping had temporarily robbed them of their usual fire—were shaded by beautiful thick lashes; her mouth had a fairly fascinating loveliness; in her carriage and in every movement there was something both charming and aristocratic.

"Do you know, miss," said the manageress, "you would do better to go on the stage rather than try to find a position."

Franka shook her head: "For that one needs talent as well as special training."

"You might attend a theatrical training-school."

"I have not the means. Besides, I should not find it congenial."

"You will find it very hard to get a place in a home . . . without references and so dangerously pretty. . . . I should hesitate to recommend you. There is nothing that I know of now to suit you. However, perhaps something may turn up; if there should, I will communicate with you."

When Franka got home after this unsuccessful circuit, the maid met her with the information that a gentleman had been there inquiring after her. He said he had been acquainted with her late father and that he would return in an hour.

Shortly after this the doorbell rang and the maid brought her a visiting-card on which Franka read:—

Freiherr Ludwig Malhof, k.k. Kämmerer.

She admitted the visitor. At the first glance she recognized in the person entering the elderly gentleman who had recently followed her from the cemetery to the house. She had only once, when she reached the door, turned around to glance at him, but his appearance was too striking not to make an immediate impression: a figure of more than ordinary height with broad shoulders and long, sweeping gray side-whiskers.

"Pardon me, Fräulein, for introducing myself, yet I might . . ."

"You knew my father?" said Franka, interrupting his apology; "will you not sit down, Baron, and tell me . . . ?"

She herself took a seat and indicated a chair for her visitor. He sat down and placed his silk hat on the floor. His eyes rested inquisitively on the lovely maiden's face.

"In fact," said he, somewhat hesitatingly, "I am . . . I met Mr. Garlett at a friend's house where he was giving lessons." His glance wandered to the opposite wall on which hung a portrait.

"Is that your picture? — A wonderful likeness."

"That is my mother's portrait."

"Ah! such a resemblance! . . . And have you lost your mother also? So you are absolutely an orphan, quite alone?"

"Quite alone."

"But you have some relatives?"

Franka shook her head.

"Then you have some protector? Perhaps a sweetheart?"

"No, no one."

"It does not seem possible that when one is so beautiful, there has not been some love-affair . . ."

A shade of annoyance flew over Franka's face: "Sir, you desired to speak to me of my father . . ."

"Exactly so, your father . . . but, my dear child, let us rather speak of yourself." In the man's eyes flashed a look of lustful eagerness. He quickly dropped them, but Franka had seen it. "Yes, of you," he continued; "your fate is worthy of all sympathy. Mr. Garlett cannot have left much property. . . . Your future is so uncertain. . . . You are exposed to all sorts of dangers. . . . You need a friend" — he stretched out his hand — "you need a fatherly friend — let me take your little white hand." . . . At the same time his voice began to tremble with ill-restrained tenderness.

Franka stood up, and withdrew her hand which the other had seized. She surveyed him with haughty eyes. "Among the dangers of which you speak certainly belongs that of an absolutely strange man penetrating to my lodgings and offering me his friendship."

The amorous cavalier realized that he had gone too far. "This energetic sally on your part shows me, my dear Miss Gartlett, that you know how to protect yourself from certain dangers. You are a very sensible young woman." He also had stood up, and had taken possession of his hat. "I shall turn this reasonableness to account. You will hear from me again. . . . I will leave you now; yet I beg of you to be convinced that I wish you everything good."

A stiff bow and he went out without Franka's making any attempt to retain him.

When she was left alone, she breathed a sigh of relief. Still a shadow of doubt came over her, whether she had done wrong in offending a possibly harmless man who wanted to befriend her, whether he had really known her father, and for that reason had followed her from the cemetery. . . . Yet, no, her feminine instinct had detected the lustful look which had betrayed its forked flame in the eyes and the honeyed smiles of the elegant old gentleman.

Alas, to be alone and without means in this world, and obliged to defend herself against such attacks! — Nowhere an arm to protect her, nowhere a heart to which she might fly for refuge. . . . And now, what? Supposing she should find no situation? And even if she did, would she not be still just as lonely, just as deserted among strangers?

"Oh, father, father," she cried aloud; "my noble, my youthful-hearted father, why did you have to die? — Die without accomplishing the high tasks which lay before you! . . ."

Whether Garlett would have ever accomplished the tasks to which his daughter made reference is very doubtful. There had been literary plans which he had long had in mind, but he had never brought any of them to fulfillment. Was it from lack of time — for when one must give private instructions to earn one's bread and butter, there is little leisure for writing books — or was it from lack of energy? He had never got beyond projects, sketches, introduc-

tions. But in Franka's eyes he always was to be the greatest author of his age. His masterpiece was there — it lay complete in his brain and required only to be written out.

In their readings and their studies together, it had often happened that he would pause and develop some idea associated with what they had been perusing, or would utter some deep remark, and add: "I will write a book about that." Themes for essays were on hand in abundance, and Franka had made a collection of such utterances which she had jotted down in a book. She had turned over these pages every day since her father's death — to her this seemed like a continued spiritual communication with him. Now, after her unexpected caller had taken his departure, and feeling doubly unhappy under the bitter impression that he had made upon her, she went once more to the cupboard where those papers were kept, in order to obtain from them diversion and edification.

She would soon be obliged to part with the books and all her household goods, for if she were burdened with a library and furniture she could not enter the house of strangers, but this beloved volume she would keep forever and in all situations of life. From it the very voice of the beloved father would speak; from it would flash up in her mind those momentary pictures, which often a sentence or a word — just as a stereopticon throws them on a screen — can waken out of the depths of memory.

The leaf which she first took up contained only brief notes in Garlett's handwriting. Were they

thoughts of his own, were they citations? Probably both mingled together. Franka read: —

The aim of men's active organization
Is the getting out of the World all the good it will yield,
Whether it be the domain of the Mind's creation,
Whether it be the crop of the well-eared field.

None of the fixed stars is nearer to us than four millions of millions of miles. . . . And we call that speck Austria — a great country!

Moral progress finally consists in the increase of the horror felt against the infliction of pain.

Over abysses of night the eye of the Spirit can wander,
There to behold the gleaming of yet uncreated light.

Nothing great can ever be accomplished without inspiration.

Where to-day the vanguard camps, there to-morrow the rearmost rests.

"Of all good works, the long list through,
Which is the best for us to do?"
When his disciples of the Prophet
Asked this, what think you he made of it?
No good work with another can interfere:
Do each in its right time: that is clear."

O Napoleon, standing on the Vendôme column, if the blood that thou hast caused to be shed, were collected here on this place, easily mightest thou drink of it, not stooping.

A few days later a packet was left at Franka's door; she herself took it in. When she saw the postman, she hoped that he was bringing her a notification from the employment bureau that a place had been found for her. What would she do if her small store of money should come to an end before she had

found any situation? There were still left the furniture and the books, but what they would bring would be small and soon exhausted. She had already made inquiries of second-hand dealers and antiquaries: these had come and looked at her possessions and offered for the "whole business" a ridiculously small price. . . .

She opened the package: a jewel-case and a letter were inclosed in it. The case contained a pair of diamond studs. The letter read as follows: —

DEAR FRÄULEIN, —

I promised that I would appeal to your reason. This is what I am doing, and I picture to myself a sensible, a very sensible young lady as reading these lines. I shall talk very frankly with you. You must also be perfectly frank, not only with me, but also with yourself, putting on no mask, affecting no pose — least of all those of virtue, such as belong only to the heroines of Gartenlaube novels. Real life must be taken and lived in another way, if one is reasonable, and that you are, my lovely Franka!

Now, listen: I have fallen violently in love with you. I saw you in the street and followed you. I made inquiries about you and your circumstances. I know the whole story; you are without family and without means, and are on the very threshold of bitter poverty. I also know that you are endeavoring to find a paying situation, for I followed you when you went to the employment office.

Tell me, really, would you, with your striking beauty, take up with a wage employment, be a dependent? Now there is one thing that I might have done: I might have tried little by little to sneak into your good graces and then . . . but it goes against my grain to play the elderly Don Juan. I am aware that I no longer have the appearance to warrant my attempting to win young maidens' hearts; but I can make a reasonable maiden happy: that

is, I can offer her a care-free life, a life full of enjoyments. Only, there is to be no misunderstanding: this is not an offer of marriage. I am a confirmed old bachelor and I propose to remain one. What I offer you is better than the fortune of being the wife of an unloved and jealous old husband, for if you wished to deceive him it would entail great worry in hiding it and it might cause a damaged reputation besides.

I offer you freedom, — perfect liberty, — the unobtrusive society of a lively man, not without wit, who will, as they say, "look after you" as long as you will permit him to do so. First and foremost he offers you luxury. Listen: luxury. That means the essential element of beauty, the only atmosphere for a creature like you. A splendid villa in the cottage-quarter, servants, a carriage of your own, gowns, jewelry: everything of this sort I lay at your feet. This does not imply a retired and restricted life — not at all: in your salon we shall receive my friends and their lady friends, — artists and writers and interesting foreigners: it shall be a real salon where everything sparkles with intellect, music, and gayety; also theaters and concerts to your heart's desire. And in summer: journeys, trips to the seashore, the mountains . . .

As you see, Franka, child, a horn of plenty filled with delights is going to be poured out for you. Only do not be a narrow-minded Philistine; only no "principles" and moral commandments after the type of ancient almanac stories or complimentary gift literature for girls of riper age. Life, my dear young lady, is entirely different from the stale moralities that find their expression in the samplers of old maids and that are honored in the tea-table chatter of suburban aunties, as they turn up their eyes in holy horror! — Life wants to be boldly grasped, to be conquered with joyous pride; above all, to be enjoyed.

Such an opportunity is not offered to many of your sex; how many, in spite of youth and beauty, must, if they are poor, waste their lives in degrading, wearisome, laborious occupations, struggling with all sorts of privations, only at

last to take up with some rough husband who will make her wretched — unless, indeed, the terrible, abominable fate overtakes her, of which possibly you know nothing, of becoming a victim of the international white-slave traffic which not infrequently makes use of intelligence offices. . . .

Was it not your good genius, your guardian angel, that has so disposed matters that an elderly man, heart-free and wise in experience, has crossed your path, has fallen in love first with your pretty face, then with your whole admirable personality, that this man has no other obligation than the disposition of a very large estate, and that he in fond expectation of your summons signs himself

Your humble Slave?

MALHOF.

After Franka had finished reading this letter, she tore it into tiny bits, and, laying them on the pale-yellow velvet of the jewel-case next the glittering stones, made the whole into a package, which she carefully tied up and sealed; and, after addressing it to Baron Ludwig Malhof, hastened to mail it at the nearest post-office station without taking a moment's time for consideration. She felt a keen satisfaction in flinging the gift and the letter down at the feet of her insulter. On receiving them back, he would redden with shame as if he had been struck by the riding-whip of an angry queen.

Or would he not rather laugh at her for her "virtuous pose," for her "moral Philistinism"? Franka was conscious that it was not a conventional "virtue" which had stimulated her impulsive action, but a mixture of one tenth sense of honor and nine tenths aversion. . . . She was not quite ignorant as regards the mysteries of love, although she had so

far had no love-affairs. Her father had delicately initiated her, through studies of plants and animals, into the secrets of the transmission of life, and her comprehensive reading, begun when she was a little child, — the poets, somewhat later the German, French, and English novelists, — had given her an insight into the whole world of passion, — into the tragedies and joys, the sorrows and dreams, of love; also into the crimes and baseness, the ardent happiness and the depths of despair, which are found in the domain of sex, and, on the whole, she had a boundlessly high ideal of love. Perhaps for the very reason that hitherto she had found no one to inspire this feeling in her soul, because no little adventures and gleams of romance had disillusioned her, her ideas and presentiments, if by chance they swept into this domain, were so highstrung.

A love union and paradise were to her two similar conceptions. A pure fountain of devoted tenderness and a glowing hearth of passionate yearnings were concealed in her inmost being, still panoplied round with virgin austerity, with a delicate, flower-like terror of any impure touch. If ever she bestowed the treasure of her love, it would be for the recipient and for herself a sacred moment of the loftiest bliss.

And the idea of her throwing herself away for money, for clothes, for precious stones, — and instead of highest rapture to feel only deepest repulsion, — to endure the embraces of that old satyr, the kisses of a shriveled, detestable mouth. . . . No! Sooner die! And should Fate never offer her the possibility of giving that treasure to one truly beloved,

then were it better sunk in the depths of the sea! That hateful creature had written something about a horn of plenty filled with joys — yes, she possessed such a one to pour out upon the dear life that would be united with hers. . . . No; that should not be wasted and shattered!

The next day, as Baron Malhof was preparing to go and get his answer from the young girl, an answer which he did not doubt would be favorable, though perhaps awkwardly expressed, he was interrupted in the midst of his fastidious toilet by the arrival of the package. After he had opened it, he hissed out two words which expressed his whole sense of disgust: — "Stupid goose!"

Several weeks elapsed, and still no situation offered. Now Franka was constrained to sell her books in order to exist for a time — and what an existence! She was standing in front of the bookcase, selecting the volumes which for the time being she still felt unable to part with; she intended to lay these aside so that the second-hand dealer whom she had summoned might not see them.

Tears stood in her eyes, for to her it was a great and painful sacrifice. She would have preferred to keep them all, for almost every one of those volumes was associated in her memory with joyous, soul-stimulating hours — all of Goethe, all of Shakespeare, Byron, Victor Hugo, and other classics of universal literature. They must all go — these good spirits which had with their magical pictures glorified so many winter evenings for the two solitaries!

Also, away with the thick-bodied works of the philosophers, from Aristotle to Schopenhauer; away with the works of history and the encyclopædias; away with the whole rows of modern fiction.

Only a shelf-full of scientific books by contemporaneous authors, — scientists, thinkers, and stylists at the same time, — Bölsche, Bruno Wille, Herbert Spencer, Emerson, Anatole France, Haeckel, Ernst Mach, Friedrich Jodl, and a few others, — these she would keep and take with her and plunge into again in order to get edification from the remembrance of the unforgettable words which her father had spoken to her when they were reading them together.

"Child, these are revelations! What the human mind — which is certainly a part of God — has gradually glimpsed at and recognized — is the disclosure of the Highest, and therefore is what men call Revelation. In astonishment and awe we are learning things of which our fathers and the majority of our contemporaries had no suspicion. We are penetrating into mysteries which bring before our eyes the grandeur of the universe and its infinities and which still remain mysteries — for our consciousness only perceives but does not comprehend them. We are standing on the threshold of perfectly new apperceptions, and so at the threshold of a wholly new epoch: fortunate are we who are to live in this twentieth century. It is the cradle of some newborn thing destined to the most glorious development. What will it be called? No one as yet knows; only posterity will find a name for it.

"Child, approach these revelations with a relig-

ious mind. You know what I call 'religious': to have the sense of reverence, to know that there are sublime things as yet unknown; to wish to be worthy of the greatness and the goodness that everywhere prevails and therefore to be good one's self. Now, perhaps you may ask what I mean by 'good'? There is no end in the chain of definitions; — do not always try to explain, but rather to feel, and then you have the right thing. . . . "

In many of the books which Franka was now glancing over were places marked by her father's marginal notes; some of them, made with pencil, were so pale that they were scarcely legible. Franka got a pen and ink and retraced the lines. While she was engaged in this work, she was interrupted by the entrance of the maid: —

"Excuse me, miss, there is a gentleman outside as wishes to speak to you."

"Oh, yes, I was expecting him; please show him in."

A comfortable-looking, well-dressed man of middle age entered. He bowed politely.

"Miss Garlett? I take the liberty . . ."

"You have come to see about the books?"

"What books?"

"Were you not sent by the dealer?"

"No, miss. I take the liberty of introducing myself: Attorney Dr. Fixstern. It concerns a matter which is of the highest importance for you."

"Oh, in regard to a situation —?"

A suspicion crossed her mind. She remembered what Baron Malhof had written her regarding the

traps that sometimes are laid in the offers of employment bureaus. She would be on her guard.

"No, not at all; something quite different. Will you permit me to sit down — as the interview may be somewhat protracted?" And he drew a chair up to the table.

"Please, I am listening; but I have not very much time . . ." And she herself sat down at some little distance.

"Oh, you will give me all the time I want! What I have to say to you is too agreeable for you to wish to break off my communication, my dear very much honored Miss Franka Garlett. That is your name, is it not?"

"Yes, that is my name," she answered coldly.

"Daughter of the late Professor Garlett, and likewise of his late lawful wife, Ida Garlett, born Countess Sielen of Sielenburg?"

"My father and I were not accustomed ever to mention that title."

"Your father was very democratic in his notions, was he not? But to the business in hand: I am the attorney of His Excellency the old Count Sielen, and I have come here at his request."

Franka listened in the greatest agitation; this did not sound like an offer of a situation and was, indeed, surprising.

Dr. Fixstern took out of his breast-pocket an envelope and laid it down before him on the table. Then he went on to say: —

"Your grandfather, miss, a short time after his return from Egypt, where he had been sojourning on

account of his health, found waiting for him a letter from Mr. Garlett. I have it here. Perhaps you are familiar with its contents? . . . No? . . . Then, will you please read it?"

With a throbbing heart Franka took the letter and unfolded it. The beloved handwriting! It was like a greeting from beyond the grave. She read: —

To the Count of Sielen: —

For almost a generation I have been to you like one vanished. Never have I attempted to approach you. As it were, an abyss lay between us — we had both inflicted the utmost pain on the other: you, by your harsh repudiation of my beloved wife, who died in consequence of it — I to you, by robbing you of your daughter. As long as we lived we could not pardon each other.

But in the presence of death, all resentment, pride, and everything of the sort which are the bitter prerogatives of the living, disappear.

This letter comes into your hands only in case death has stricken me before my Franka is provided for; such is the name of my daughter, your grandchild. Orphaned, left without a farthing, she might be exposed to the deepest poverty and the greatest dangers. This thought is my sorrow and my torment. The maiden is sweet and good and highly educated, and — as you cannot read coldly — she has grown up to be the image of her mother — feature for feature. Graf Sielen, I beg of you: look after the young girl. Do not let her suffer want or ruin.

The signature, with date and address, followed. Having read it through, Franka gazed at the sheet for a long time.

Dr. Fixstern awakened her out of her thoughts: —

"Would you like to know, miss, how His Excellency responds to this letter of your father — a letter

which, it must be said, is very effective by reason of its brevity?"

A warm stream of joy expanded Franka's heart. The lawyer had already informed her that he had pleasant news for her: so it was clear that her grandfather was going to look after her: there would be some one to love her again. . . .

"Well, Doctor," she asked, with eagerness, "what message do you bring me?"

"A pleasant one, my dear miss. The count has instituted inquiries about you, has had you carefully watched of late, and has now decided to invite you to come to Sielenburg. He will provide for your future. He himself would have come to Vienna to fetch you, but illness confines him to his room — the old gentleman is now more than seventy — Egypt seems not to have done him any good. Now I am commissioned, in the first place, to make this disclosure to you, and, in the second place, to hand you these lines."

He took a second sheet out of the envelope and handed it to Franka, who read as follows: —

SIELENBURG, May 20, 1909.

DEAR GRANDDAUGHTER: —

I invite you to make your home with me. The bearer, my attorney, will provide whatever is necessary and will accompany you hither. God bless you.

COUNT EDUARD SIELEN.

"In the third place," proceeded Dr. Fixstern, "I am to hand you a small sum of money," and suiting the action to the word he laid on the table a bundle

of bank-notes — there were ten one-hundred-kronen bills, — "and, in the fourth place, to consult with you regarding the prospective journey to Moravia. You probably require some little preparation and in this my wife may be able to help you. . . . Now, my dear miss, have you a little more time to spare for me?"

Franka offered him her hand. She could not immediately find words — it was like a dream, like a fairy-tale. A home! So suddenly to be rescued from all her tribulation and all her desolation — a home!

CHAPTER II

CHLODWIG HELMER

At the Sielenburg, 1909.

Dear Cousin and Beloved Friend!

It was a pleasant surprise when your letter, after long wanderings, reached me here. I was convinced that you had entirely forgotten me, — ten long years we had lost sight of each other, — and now suddenly down upon me rains this letter in which you relate to me the experiences which you have been having in all this time and you want to have the like from me.

Oh, how gladly do I fulfill your wish! I am simply hungry for a regular outpouring of my mind. Your twenty pages would make the basis of a fascinating novel: interesting events described in a fluent style. Now, my answer ought not to prove much shorter: I shall devote to it a few hours of leisure, but I shall not take much trouble about polishing my style. "Unconstrained" — do you remember? That was the catchword that we selected at the time when we became intimate friends as students in the same class in the Theresianum. "Unconstrained" — ah! in this word lie whole revolutions, and you know well that I have always been a revolutionist.

Now for my story. I will begin at the very end, that is — this very day. Before I confide to you what I have been doing during these last years, you must know where and what I am at the present moment. My residence is called Schloss Sielenburg. It is surrounded by a great park of twenty acres, and from the window is visible a forest which is my delight. Many trees a hundred years old, and one oak a thousand years old, stand in it, and there are moss and shrubbery and the twitter of birds.

That there are still such forests on the earth can console one for the existence of cities and suburbs.

From my window I can see the roof of the stables where there are six pairs of carriage-horses and six saddle-horses. A garage for the automobiles is just building. Among the saddle-horses is a gray with a silken mane, with some Arab in his build and behavior, with such thoughtful and reproachful, and at the same time affectionate, eyes — ah! I tell you there are animals also here below, the existence of which can console us for many of the councilors and aldermen that are their contemporaries! So you may easily imagine how reconciled with the world I feel as I ride on that gray through yonder forest!

I am not master of all this accumulated wealth: castle, grounds, forests, stables, and garages are the property of the Right Honorable Count Eduard Sielen — a sick old man. He exercises his dominion also over a secretary, and that secretary am I.

Now you know — I, the cabinet minister's son, over whose future career we could not make plans sufficiently ambitious, — to be an ambassador was one of the lowest of my expectations, — am now in a subservient, humble position, am obliged to be forever ready, at my gracious master's beck and call, to write at his dictation or read to him the newspapers, or anything else. And yet I feel much more free than when I was in the government service, for I can throw up my place at any moment, and the work which I am performing is independent of what I think; it leaves my private character, my personal actions, untouched, whereas in the service of the State the master cannot be changed and one must subordinate his whole "I" to his standards, and only act and work as an unelastic system demands.

No, I could not have endured that yoke. I did not endure it. After completing my volunteer year, I began my regular service under a district chief; once I ventured to contradict my superior, and as a punishment was trans-

ferred to a smaller district at soul-killing labor and no living wage; one must practice for some years before one gets a decent salary — I left the service.

In the mean time my parents had died — so I had no need of asking any one's advice. I was free. I had inherited a small property profitably invested in industrials; this made me independent. I traveled about the world and I have seen a tremendous lot and learned a tremendous lot from my experiences.

Then suddenly the value of my industrials fell so far below par that one fine day the bonds were so much waste paper. That meant: "Go to work again." For a time I was a journalist, but that also was an unendurable yoke. I was obliged to bend my judgment to suit the opinions of the paper on which I was engaged as an editorial writer, and these opinions were, to tell the truth, no opinions at all, but consisted in following the instructions given out by the ministry. Here again was a form of slavery, of gagging, which I could not put up with, and I left the editorial sanctum just as I had left the government office. Then I was happy when I was offered a position as secretary to the old Count Sielen which I have been filling for two years now. Here I can at least poetize and think as I please.

Yes, poetize. Perhaps you did not know that I have discovered in myself the impulse to write verses, and a collection of my poems has already appeared in print and has been enthusiastically received by the critics. I will not name the title and publisher, lest you may think that I am hinting to you to buy it — moreover, I have issued it under a pseudonym which I will not divulge until my reputation is established. At the present time I am putting the last touches to a four-act drama. You have no notion what a delight, what an exalting consciousness of accomplishment, lies in writing out from one's very soul what moves it. And to create! To enrich the world with something new! The joy of creation is the highest of all joys. If I were not a poet I would crave to be an in-

ventor. . . . I do not know, for example, whether the name "Edison" should not be spoken with as much respect as the name "Shakespeare." I am now following enviously the work of the aviators — I look up to the Zeppelins and the Wrights as to heroes and especially as to heralds. They are sounding the call to a new era. They are summoning their fellow-men to vanquish an unheard-of future — perhaps without knowing it, for their minds are fixed on the mechanical part of their work. The aërial age! Do you surmise what that signifies? Certainly, those have no notion of it who would accomplish nothing else with their sky-commanding apparatus than to elevate into the air the ancient scourges of the depths.

In your story of the last ten years which you have so kindly made me acquainted with, you write a vast amount about your experiences in life and love.

Pardon me, if I do not tell you anything about my experiences in love. I do not want to profane, in dry epistolary prose, whatever has sanctified my life with tender charm, and I would not soil my pen with vulgar adventures. Every man has in this domain a bit of magic dreamland and a — register of his peccadilloes. The one I leave undisclosed, the other unconfessed.

On the Sielenburg at the present time — not taking into account the kitchen department — there is no one of the gentle sex dangerous to any man's heart or peace of mind. The housekeeping is under the charge of the count's widowed sister, the Countess Schollendorf, who is at least sixty-two years old. She exercises control over the household and the servants and she invites guests according to her own idiosyncrasies — for the most part ancient female cousins. There are three of that sort here now, accompanied by their maids and their lapdogs. One of these females — her name is Albertine — has two terrible peculiarities: the first is sincerity, and the second is that she is deeply concerned with the well-being of all her fellow-men. It results from the first that she is always telling people to their faces the most disagreeable truths,

and from the second that she expects of them every sort of sacrifice and renunciation and other torments — of course, "only for their own good."

There are still other habitués of the establishment: the castle chaplain and an aged ruined cousin four times removed, to whom Count Sielen furnishes bread and butter. As you see, it is not a very gay society, nor is the conversation at table very enlivening. Yet, just now, the count, because of his miserable health, is accustomed to take his meals in his own room, and I keep him company, which is preferable to sitting at the lower end of the table in the big dining-room and listening to uninteresting small-talk, mostly confined to the idle gossip of court and society, unless, by chance, thanks to the old cousin, who is an archreactionary, it skirts the domain of politics — which makes it particularly distasteful to me. This gentleman would especially like to see restored the conditions that prevailed before the year 1848, and from this standpoint he illuminates the present-day events and questions of which his newspaper — the "Reichspost" — brings him an echo.

That his opposite neighbor at table has Jewish blood in his veins — you know my mother's grandfather was a Jew — does not prevent him from letting his opinion concerning regrettable disturbances culminate in the sentence: "The Jews are responsible for that": — for example, the Russian revolution and the horrors connected with it, all initiated by the Jews: the decay of morals, the increase of poverty, the downfall of the old aristocratic families, earthquakes and floods (these latter as God's punishments) — all these things are attributable to the Jews. He does not say in so many words that the destruction of this pernicious race would be a praiseworthy remedy, but he leaves it to be plainly understood.

The chaplain — I must give him due credit for this — does not agree with such truculences: he is a good man, a gentle Christian, and as such avoids everything coarse and spiteful. During these discussions I remain obsti-

nately dumb, for I cannot contend with Cousin Coriolan. The eyes of his yearning are turned back to the past, while mine look to the future, and it is impossible, while standing back-to-back, to fence with him.

And do I hear you ask: "Your count, your employer, what is he like?" He? — A dear old fellow: I cannot say anything else. Genial, jovial, simple, friendly, gay. He must have been a man of captivating personality. Now, indeed, he is old and ill, and yet his sense of humor has not deserted him.

The count is a widower and childless. He had two children, but lost them both under tragic circumstances. The daughter — a marvelously beautiful girl — ran off with her brother's tutor. At that time the countess was still living — a terribly haughty and hard-hearted woman, and nothing would induce her to pardon her daughter for this step. The count would have gladly given in, but the inexorable woman would not relent.

In a few years the daughter died, and shortly afterwards the son met with a fatal accident in a boating-party. It was whispered about that he was of very light weight, and that he had showed great lack of love and respect for his parents: consequently, his loss was not such a severe blow to the count, although it deprived him of his only son and heir. He was much more deeply affected by the loss of his daughter; in the first place, her elopement with a man who was regarded as unworthy of her, and then her death. But time has healed all those wounds. The cheerful, light-hearted temperament of my dear count (for I really love the man) won the day. He had the reputation of being the gayest and wittiest cavalier in his time, and even only two years ago, when I first entered his house, he was in the happiest state of mind and of a geniality which simply captivated my heart.

Just now, indeed, he is a great sufferer, and old age, which he has so long victoriously resisted, is at last getting in its detestable work. He is not and has never been what is called a high intelligence. He is clever with a

somewhat superficial cleverness, without great depth — without complications, without subtlety, but abounding in straightforward, honest, human understanding. His wit never stings and never bites; it merely smiles and winks; in short, my poor count is, as I rather disrespectfully remarked above, a dear old fellow.

I have never made a confidant of him about my anonymous poetizing: he has no inclination for poetry. His reading — that is, what I read to him — consists exclusively of selections from the daily newspapers, the weekly comic papers, French novels, — but they must be piquant; and for serious pabulum: memoirs of princes, generals, and statesmen. Military and diplomatic history, especially relating to the time in which he took an active part, interests him. But all this has inspired me with a great disgust at the kettle of chatter and intrigue in which the soup of the unsuspecting people's destiny is cooked. Aye! the nations have no suspicion what contemptible means the great men who make universal history use, what petty aims they pursue: personal jealousies and ambitions, entanglements of lies and errors and accidents, whereof are born the mighty events which are explained as the expression of Divine Will, or of a scheme of creation conditioned by natural laws. And, *vice versa*, the great men high up know nothing of the people: they fail to comprehend their sufferings and hopes. Their awakening and stretching of limbs they have no suspicion of . . .

Two days later.

Since I wrote the above, something has happened. For some time it has seemed to me that the count was concealing something from me. If his attorney, Dr. Fixstern, came, I was dismissed from the room, and letters addressed to him were not as usual dictated to me, but were written by the count himself. And now I know what the secret was; early this morning the count confided in me: The child left by the daughter who eloped with the tutor

has turned up, and the grandfather has invited the young girl to make her home at the Sielenburg. She will be coming now in a few days. The old gentleman is delighted.

I am full of curiosity. The young thing will scarcely feel very comfortable at the Round Table which I described to you. Well, later in the summer there are various visitors from the neighboring castles, among them young people, and in the autumn there are many brilliant hunting-parties. Of course, owing to my position, I hold aloof from all these things. My world is not this world of aristocratic society — my kingdom is that of the imagination. There I sometimes indulge in revels and there I hope to attain some rank — not mediocre; there ceases my modesty. Artists must not be — inwardly — modest, else they are not artists. Just as an athlete feels his muscles, so must the artist feel his power of creation. A host of thoughts press forward to be formulated, and these thoughts are elastic and swelling like an athlete's muscles! A domain which no Pegasus' hoof has as yet ever touched invites me. First I am going to finish my drama, which treats of a social problem, and then I shall fly away to that virgin land where horizons flooded with light open out before me. I am going to compose the epic of the conquest of the air. . . . I shall fly up to the flaming corona of the Sun, and from that I will pluck down forked flames to annihilate all that is low and common. I am called away, so I will mail this and will write again.

Yours ever,

CHLODWIG HELMER.

CHAPTER III

FRANKA'S NEW HOME

FRANKA GARLETT leaned back with closed eyes in one corner of the compartment. In another corner sat Dr. Fixstern, in whose company the young girl was making the trip to her new home. The railway journey had already lasted four hours and they were not far from their destination.

For some time Franka had been sitting there motionless, as if she were asleep. But she was not sleeping; she wanted undisturbed to give herself up to her thoughts. Very mixed feelings stirred in her heart. When she called up the idea of "home," which had come to her mind at the first revelation of the change impending in her destiny, she felt excitement and a sense of joy; but, immediately, this was succeeded by a certain timidity. "Home!" — that is the cherished spot where all one's loves, all one's accustomed habits, all one's recollections cluster; but she was coming to an unknown place, among absolutely strange people! Even though Count Sielen was her grandfather, she had never seen him, never even thought of him; between him and her there was no common remembrance, except the fact that he had been cruel to her parents. In Count Sielen's eyes, Frank Garlett had been only the shameless brigand who had robbed him of his daughter: Count Sielen had never known what a splendid

man this unwelcome son-in-law had been. She would tell her grandfather that, but would he believe it? And would she be able to love the old man? And would the great-aunt accept her? After the description which Dr. Fixstern gave of her, — a rather proud, rather bigoted, rather narrow-minded old lady, — she had little hope that she would find a mutually sympathetic relationship in that quarter. Ah, she was so alone, so alone in the world, after being accustomed to confidential comradeship with her beloved father! . . . Two tears trickled down her cheeks.

"Oh, Miss Garlett," cried the doctor, "I thought you were asleep, and there you are crying!"

Franka straightened herself up: "Oh, I was thinking of my poor dead father."

"Think rather of your grandfather, and instead of tormenting yourself, rejoice! Just think what an unexpected piece of good fortune has come to you."

"You are right: it is ungrateful of me."

"Your grandfather will assuredly see to it that you are suitably married."

"I don't intend to be married."

"You don't want to marry?"

"Oh, well, perhaps; why not? But to be married off . . ."

"Oh, yes, I understand the distinction. But now it is time for you to put on your hat and I will get the traveling-bag down; the next station is ours."

Franka pinned on her hat; it was black, for she still wore mourning, but it was pretty and very becoming. Under the direction of Dr. Fixstern's wife,

she had provided herself with new and elegant clothing, and she was not insensible to the comfortable feeling of being neatly and correctly dressed, although nothing was farther from her nature than vanity and a love of finery.

The train came to a stop, and Franka's heart began to beat: so now, now was the beginning of a new life. . . . Would there be any one from the castle to meet her and greet her? . . . The platform was full of people, but merely passengers of the third class, waiting for the next train — peasants, market-women with baskets or bundles. There was also a servant in livery. He approached the coach from which Franka and her escort were dismounting. On the street in front of the station an automobile was waiting — a great open limousine, the white lacquer of which glittered in the sun. The chauffeur was standing beside it and helped Franka to enter. It was the first time in her life that she had ever been in such a vehicle. Indeed, a new life in every respect!

Along a road between red-blooming clover-fields, through a fir forest, the branches of which were loaded with bright green cones, and then up a long avenue of ancient chestnut trees, the chauffeur took them toward the castle with its towers and pinnacles, its bow-windows and verandas, which now began to be visible against the horizon in the distance. The weather was warm, but the air, fragrant with spring, fanned Franka's face with refreshing coolness as the machine swiftly sped along. Franka took deep breaths; her cheeks were aglow with color and a smile of joy played around her young mouth.

She had only just been shedding tears, and now a keen feeling of delight swept through her whole being. The future must bring her something beautiful . . . she would not have to be always so alone . . . ! The wide world is, indeed, a savings bank in which rich funds of love are deposited, and youth, in itself, is a kind of checkbook.

Along park drives bordered with shrubbery, past flower-beds and pools, from which rose glittering fountains, flew the machine, and came to a stop under the *porte-cochère* of the castle. Several servants stood waiting and took her hand-luggage. On the steps above, Franka was received by the count's sister.

"Welcome, dear child. . . . How are you, Dr. Fixstern . . . so you have brought the child with you safely, have you? Come, Franka, we will go directly to my brother — he is waiting for you in great anticipation."

The lady spoke in a friendly tone, and her face wore a friendly expression; but the doctor, who knew her well, could not help perceiving that both in her voice and in the expression of her face there was a tone and a look of insincerity.

Through a long corridor adorned with potted plants and hung with paintings, Franka was conducted into another wing and ushered into the count's apartment. It was a room paneled with dark leather and filled with ancient furniture. In a tall armchair near the window sat the count, a pillow behind his head and a covering over his knees. Pale and ill as he looked, he was a handsome old man.

Noble, regular features, his white beard trimmed close and to a point, large blue eyes beaming with friendliness, his hair silver-white, but still brushed up in a thick mass above his forehead.

"Here, Eduard, I bring you your granddaughter. . . . Come, Dr. Fixstern, let us go into the adjoining room; we will leave the two alone for a little."

A young man, who was sitting in one corner of the room at a table covered with writings, stood up and was about to leave the room.

"Remain, if you please, Mr. Helmer, and continue your writing; you will not disturb me. And you, my girl, come nearer, quite close, so that I may look at you. . . . My eyes are growing dim . . ." He held out to her a slim white hand.

Franka went to him with quick steps, knelt on the footstool that was placed near his chair, and kissed the hand he offered her: "Grandfather! How kind of you!"

He laid his hand on her head, and bent her face back.

"So it is! you are the living picture of your poor mother. Remarkable! I hope, however, you will not resemble her in all respects . . . at least, that you will not also run away out of this with some young rascal . . ."

Franka sprang up.

"Count . . . this can be no home for me, where my father is to be insulted."

"There, there! not so fast! I like it in you, that you spring to the defense of your beloved father. I beg your pardon. Besides, I did not mean anything

so very bad. The word 'rascal' in my mouth carries no insult — I myself was one when I was young, and I should be very glad if any one would call me an old rascal now — but here I must sit, tied down to this chair . . . 'Count!' I will not let you scold me that way; just say, as you did so prettily a moment ago, — 'Grandfather.' . . . And I have still another thing to ask your forgiveness for: that it was so long before I took any notice of you. . . . That was cruel to you and cruel to the memory of my daughter. . . . She made a mistake . . . but of all mistakes is not implacability one of the worst and stupidest? — So, little girl, be forgiving . . . call me 'Grandfather' . . . that is right; a great French poet has written a book entitled 'L'Art d'être Grandpère.'"

"Yes, Victor Hugo," assented Franka, nodding.

"You seem to be well read. . . . Now, you see, I am beginning rather late to learn that art, but I shall be an industrious scholar. — And now, will you be conducted to your room? I feel ill again . . . a real cross sickness is . . . go, dear child."

Franka was about to bend over the old gentleman's hand to kiss it again, but he lifted her head up and imprinted a kiss on her brow.

An hour later Franka had already finished the unpacking of her possessions; she had disposed her books and photographs, and this communicated a somewhat cozy appearance to the long unoccupied chamber, with its stiff, old-fashioned furniture. It was an enormous room with four windows looking down into the park. Gay-flowered chintz covered the chairs and sofas and the same material served as

hangings for the windows and the curtains of the bed. Adjoining was a little toilet-room and bath-room. Next to this was the chamber of a maid whose services were at the disposal of the "gnädiges Fräulein."

So new, so unwonted was all this magnificence! Ought not all these unexpected, these truly brilliant surroundings to have awakened a measureless joy in Franka, who had spent her young days in the midst of such privations? But why was she so sad?

Ah, yes, if her father had only lived and she might have shared these delights with him, or at least have told him about them. . . .

Joys are like tones — in order to sound, they must have resonance.

CHAPTER IV

LIFE IN SIELENBURG CASTLE

FIVE months had passed and a cold gray autumn had set in with pallid suns, soggy mists, wailing tempests. As melancholy as the weather was Franka's mood. Sielenburg had not proved a home for her: she felt that she was a stranger, that she was in exile. Her grandfather, who showed her friendly affection and to whom her heart went out in sympathy, grew constantly worse, so that more and more rarely he summoned her to his side, and when she came, he had but little to say; he merely would ask her to tell him about her past, to describe her early life, and to talk about her parents.

He asked her very little about her present existence, and even if he had done so she assuredly would not have told him that she was wretchedly unhappy; that the great-aunt always treated her with the utmost coldness and reserve; that the insipid conversation of the two other old ladies "got on her nerves"; that the cousin, with his views expressed so arrogantly and dogmatically, — views so diametrically opposed to all that she had learned from her father, — still more affected her, indeed, caused her real agony — all this and much more she could not confide to her grandfather without troubling him, without making him think her ungrateful. Of all the inhabitants of the castle, Mr. Helmer,

the young secretary, would have been the most sympathetic, perhaps for the very reason that he was young, and youth feels drawn by irresistible power to youth; but she came scarcely at all into contact with him, because he was rarely present at meals, and when he was, he took no part in the conversation.

Only once had he made an exception to this reserve. At table Cousin Coriolan had spoken about the dirigible balloon: he said: "So then, the thing seems to be feasible."

"And you remember, Baron," remarked the priest, "that you have always expressed the opinion that all these aëronautical and aviationary projects were 'the utmost nonsense,' 'crack-brained balderdash,' 'lunatic absurdity,' 'the summit of imbecility' — I noticed your words particularly — I like your strong expressions . . ."

"Well, well, Chaplain, to err is human . . . but I venture even now to predict that nothing practical or useful will ever come out of them . . . only catastrophes. . . . What would happen if such a monster should fall on the Emperor's roof at Schönbrunn? . . . For reconnoitering in war, it would be extremely dangerous, for naturally the enemy would shoot up at them. The only good that they would accomplish would be the scattering down of explosives — but they would never be able to take any great amount up with them and the mark from such a height would be very difficult to hit—it would be like spitting from the balcony on a nickel lying on the sidewalk. the much-vaunted airship business will in the long run —"

"Make of man another man," interrupted Chlodwig Helmer, raising his voice. Franka pricked up her ears. "Behind the azure door which has been flung open streams a light, destined to breathe new souls — aërial souls — into new generations of men."

The rest of the company exchanged glances as much as to say: "What is the matter with the man? What has got into him?"

Franka would gladly have heard him continue.

"Please, Mr. Helmer, explain what you mean . . ."

But he shook his head and said no more.

She occasionally met him in her grandfather's room; but there also he generally remained silent. If he spoke, as he did only to answer some direct question, she found something particularly attractive both in the sound of his voice and in the choice of his words.

He was not handsome — far from it; he would be rather more likely to be called ugly; but it was not a common ugliness, and whatever else he was, Mr. Helmer was certainly a gentleman.

Franka had not failed to notice that she inspired the young man with admiration: it betrayed itself in his eyes, in his attitude, in the intonations of his voice. It was a thoroughly respectful admiration which strove to hide and not to betray itself, and consequently Franka responded to it with many a gracious word and friendly smile.

But an end soon came to this harmless little flirtation, if it could be called such. Six weeks after Franka's arrival, Helmer was obliged to take his

departure from Sielenburg. Cousin Albertine had indulged in some idle gossip concerning the two. "Evidently," she said, "that crazy secretary is falling in love with Franka." Something peculiar also was noticed in Franka's behavior, and after her mother's escapade — the apple does not fall far from the tree — and it was to be feared that some similar fatality might ensue. . . . These and other insinuations made to the count's sister, and by her communicated to the count himself, resulted in the young man's being dismissed. After his departure Franka felt still more isolated.

In the course of the summer several times, but not frequently, for an hour or two during the afternoon, callers from the neighborhood came to the castle, and were served with a cup of tea in the garden. The conversation always revolved around the same topics: society and family news, the prospects of the harvest, hunting experiences, chronicles of sicknesses, and the results of "cures" at the sea-baths, gossip of the court mixed in with a dash of politics (from the agrarian point of view), and with lamentations over the degeneracy of the times (from the clerical point of view).

It devolved on Franka, as the daughter of the house, to pour the tea, yet the others treated her with a shade of condescension, as if she were only a kind of companion. She could never even try to insinuate herself into the good graces of these strangers; she remained taciturn and reserved. The topics of conversation and the questions that occupied the lives of this little circle scarcely appealed to

her; perhaps, if she had grown up and been educated among them, she might have found edification in it, but it was all strange to her — on the other hand, the others had no comprehension of her aspirations, her ambitions, her realm of thought.

One day she had a surprising encounter. As she entered the salon her eyes fell on a stranger who was sitting in the midst of the usual circle. His back was turned to the door, so she could not see his face, but there was something strikingly familiar in his figure and attitude. And with good reason — for as she came nearer, Countess Adele introduced him to her as Baron Malhof. He manifested no surprise; he evidently knew of the altered circumstances of Franka's life. He made a low bow.

"It is a great pleasure to meet you again, Miss Garlett."

"What, do you know my niece?"

"Yes, I made Miss Garlett's acquaintance a short time ago and learned to have a high regard for her."

Malhof sat next to Franka at the tea-table. Unobserved by the others, he said to her in an undertone: —

"You seem to be still incensed with me — but you ought to know what I have done for you. I have just been in to see your grandfather. I was well aware that you were making your home here, for I had learned the whole story from your landlady of whom I have frequently inquired about what you are doing. And to-day I told your grandfather the whole story of the little comedy in which you and I were the actors . . ."

"You did . . . ?"

"Yes, although the part I played was rather deplorable; for that very reason yours was all the more brilliant, and I felt that I owed it to you to make this reparation. Count Sielen had a right to know what a brave, high-minded maiden his new-found granddaughter is."

"Was that your opinion of my behavior, Baron Malhof?"

"Not at the first moment — to tell the honest truth; at that time I was quite vexed and thought your behavior simply — pardon me the expression! — simply stupid, terribly *vieux jeu;* — but here is a somewhat old-fashioned *milieu* where all such heroic actions of virtue awake a response and I said to myself: 'If I tell the whole story to the old gentleman, it may prove useful to the young lady who so abused me . . . that letter you tore into bits! — it will put her into a beautiful light and make her still dearer to the old man's heart,' — as you see, I am capable also of noble impulses. There is one thing I should like to ask you: Are you happy?"

"How could I fail to regard myself as happy? It would be sheer ingratitude toward fate!"

"Well, yes, 'to regard yourself as happy,' but 'to feel happy'? Life cannot be very gay among all these wigs. . . . I do not often come here — only when I am visiting their neighbors at the castle of Dornhof, where I generally spend a week almost every year. Then I make my respects here and I have always found the house tedious to the last degree, except when the old count used to enliven it

with his presence; but for the most part during the last few years he has been away traveling. Of course, I had heard about the family romance, — the daughter who ran off with the tutor, — but that you were the result of that elopement, I never suspected until I made a fool of myself about you. . . . Do not look so angry; that folly is past and gone. . . . I have taken my place toward you — especially since I have confessed to your grandfather — as a kind of honorary uncle."

On this episode Franka looked back with satisfaction.

On the other hand, she remembered something very unpleasant that had happened to her during the early days of her new life. She had been summoned at a quite unusual hour to her great-aunt's chamber. She had scarcely crossed the threshold when she realized that she had been invited to appear as a defendant before a criminal court. Behind the table sat the old Countess Schollendorf in her sternest aspect, with her headdress askew, betokening inward excitement; next her, in the capacity of an assistant, Aunt Albertine, and on the table as *corpus delicti* two books which Franka instantly recognized as her property.

"Come in; sit down and explain yourself: How came you by these books?" This was spoken in a harsh, inquisitorial tone.

The books were Prince Kropotkin's "Memoirs of a Revolutionist" and Bölsche's "Liebesleben in der Natur."

Franka had calmly taken a seat.

"I might rather ask," she replied, "how come these books here, when they were locked up in my bookcase?"

Miss Albertine, with a honeyed expression, put in her word: —

"My dear girl, this matter concerns your own good: I myself brought the books down. The bookcase was not locked; the key was in the door; I did not break it open. It is perfectly natural that we should be interested in what is read by a young person over whose well-being we have to watch. The other books there I do not know. . . . I should have to read them first; but the titles of these two are sufficient to condemn them. So I brought them down to Aunt Adele. We have glanced through them and . . ."

"And," said the superior judge, taking the words out of the other's mouth, "I had you summoned to tell you that you are to hand over to us your whole library — it was evidently your inheritance from Professor Garlett, who seems to have been a Freemason. . . . And I will speak to you with the utmost frankness: you must know that a young girl of our circles does not make the acquaintance of revolutionists and their works. . . . These are very, very pernicious theories — the worst possible. And then Socialism and Feminism and Pacifism, and all these new 'isms' such as are coming into existence in our day. . . . And now that 'Liebesleben'! I trust you have not read it!"

"Oh, yes, I have — I read it with my father."

"And are you not ashamed of yourself? This is

certainly the most extraordinary thing I ever heard of! Why, one learns there how herrings break the sixth commandment — it is positively disgusting! Do you not know that there are things which a sensible young maiden — I will not say of our circles, but any sensible maiden — ought to have no suspicion of? What have you to say in your defense?"

"Nothing."

Franka felt as if she would choke and she uttered the word with a deep breath.

"What does this all mean? Do you wish to rouse my anger?"

"Do not get excited, Adele," interrupted Miss Albertine appeasingly; "just think — the poor child has not enjoyed the right sort of education; she inherited her mother's frivolous nature and on her father's side she is of no family at all — therefore, she lacks the instinct of what becomes our world. . . . Yes, you are lacking in many respects, Franka, and if I speak in all sincerity, — it is impossible for me to be anything else than sincere, — it is only with the intention of being useful to you. You are still young enough to learn a good deal, to change and to become worthy of the great advantage that you are enjoying here."

Franka's throat felt as if a tight band was fastened around it. It occurred to her to run away; she was almost tempted to kill herself — to jump out of the window. . . . But after a while, as Miss Albertine's discourse kept on its even flow, she recovered her self-control.

"I ask only one thing," she said — "that this

whole charge be brought before my grandfather. I will abide by his decision."

"Do you really wish this? I had intended to spare you this disgrace, and was going to say nothing to my brother; but if you yourself desire it . . . very well, I will send and find out if we can see him."

When an affirmative answer was brought, the three ladies betook themselves to the count's apartment. Miss Albertine held the *corpus delicti* under her arm. The count was alone. He was sitting in his accustomed place in the reclining-chair, and looked exceptionally lively and well.

"What! Three man strong you march along!" he exclaimed, greeting them.

"Yes, grandfather, you see here a judge, a witness, and a defendant — and I am the defendant; now you are to be the supreme judicial court."

"Oho! and is there no advocate for the defense?"

"I shall be my own advocate."

"Very good: now what is the complaint?"

"It is no joking matter," said the Countess Adele.

"Indeed, it is not," said Miss Albertine with emphasis. "It concerns Franka's own good; else we should not have bothered you with it. Your condition demands perfect quiet — you look very miserable. . . . Forgive me, but I must tell you the truth only for love of you so that you may take care of yourself."

"Yes, yes, your frankness is touching. But to the business. . . ."

The two old ladies, using almost the identical words as before, formulated their complaint and at

the same time handed him the books that were under suspicion.

When they had had their say, Franka cried: "May I now offer my defense?"

The count raised his hand. "No, what is the use? I see clearly how the whole matter stands and can render my judgment. A crime, at least a very detestable misdemeanor, has been committed — or, rather, a whole series of misdemeanors: — looting of others' property; inquisitiveness and espionage; talebearing and making charges; injury and insult; attempted moral constraint and tyranny!"

"But, Eduard," exclaimed the old countess reproachfully, "do you blame us instead of this erring child?"

"Most certainly, I blame you. Franka is neither in the path of error, nor is she a child. She has not been brought up as you would have brought up your daughters, and she has different ideas. Has she attempted to force these ideas on you? Has she ever tactlessly and offensively expressed her ideas in order to bring yours into unfavorable contrast?"

"No, she has done nothing of that kind. On the contrary, she has hypocritically kept her terrible ideas, imbibed from these terrible books, quite to herself."

"Why do you say 'hypocritically'? I call it tactful. If one lives with people who belong to another world of ideas, it is right to avoid bringing up the discussion of questions whereon they would differ; and so people, even though they think so differently, can get along together very congenially.

Moreover, there is nothing so very terrible about the two books — I happen to know them. Bölsche is a scientist; Kropotkin an idealist. I do not exactly share their point of view; I am an old country squire, and have taken little interest in the natural sciences and social problems; but I know that we live at a time when much that is new is crowding out the old. We can't make all shoes on one last, and we cannot expect our grandchildren to be educated exactly as our fathers were educated. And as far as education goes, certainly nothing more needs be said about Franka's. She will be of age in a few months: I had her come here to a home, not to a young ladies' boarding-school. I will not put up with her life being spoiled by the others in this house."

"Oh! how good and kind you are!" stammered Franka, who had once more knelt down on the foot-stool near Sielen's reclining-chair.

"Never mind, my girl; don't bother your head about it. The aunts meant well. . . . But now I will ask you to leave me for a while. The affair has agitated me."

That ended the incident. To be sure, a little bitterness remained, but the two old ladies from that time forth avoided any nursery-governess tone toward the young girl. The sick master's will was law on the Sielenburg.

Still another incident, somewhat later, produced a still deeper impression. It was a letter. Almost never did the postman bring Franka any mail. In all the more excitement she tore open the envelope which she found one fine morning lying on her breakfast-tray. It was in an unknown hand and

unsigned. After she read it, she easily guessed who its writer was.

VIENNA, August 2, 1909.

My greetings to you, Franka! As an actual man I am not justified in addressing you thus familiarly, but this is only a kind of wave-motion from soul to soul. The reason for this letter is, that you appeared to me last night in a dream. You looked sad and troubled. Something of questioning and yearning was expressed in your face and was evident in your outstretched arms. In what direction would your desires, your longings, your questionings wing their flight? Your surroundings will give no fulfillment of them, no answer to them. Perhaps I may be able to serve as a guide — perhaps I may be able to solve some of the riddles for you. And since you have appeared to me in a dream — and because I am fond of you — I venture to approach you as a bodyless teacher, a formless brother, a lover who hopes for nothing. Or rather — do not call it presumptuous! — I come to you as a priest. I have religious consolation in readiness for you and I will lay down religious commandments for you.

Yet, let this be for the last. We will first speak of worldly things. The question which a pretty girl of twenty asks of fate — even though she does not acknowledge it to herself — is, "Shall I be happily married?" She might just as well ask, "Shall I find a needle in a haystack?" For it is just as difficult, out of the hundred thousand chances of an unhappy marriage, to secure the one slender chance of a happy one, although every young woman believes that for her particularly there are several ready for choice. And the claims are not modest. Dozens of conditions cluster around the idea of "happiness" — above all, love. And in it are united all the attributes and aspects of this manifold phenomenon: — the platonic and erotic; passion, sentimentality, devotion, sweet torment and tearful ecstasy, hot desire and the full and peaceful possession — and this whole medley, presumably

to last as long as life, based on eternal faithfulness . . . (*il faut en rabattre!*)

But love alone is not sufficient. To happiness, as dreamed by the young maiden, some other things are needed: if not wealth, at least perfect pecuniary independence, a comfortable and fairly elegant household, continued good health, social recognition, pleasant occupation, pretty toilettes — perhaps also handsome children. I am speaking of the average girl, not of the ultra-modern type before whom a quite special expression of personality is held up, or from whom the well-known "call of motherhood" is extorted.

To that class you do not belong; you are not eccentric, you are calm and reflective, but assuredly you are also hungry for happiness.

Now the question for you is: "Will Destiny pay the note which Youth and Beauty have drawn on her?" Who can tell? It is a matter of accident. Accident is only another name for Fate, and cannot give you any remedy against her tricks. Consequently we must possess something to raise us above all perils, above poverty and loneliness, above illness and sorrow, yes, verily, above the terrors of death!

If you had been educated in a convent, such a talisman would have been put into your possession: the knowledge that you were a child of God, the belief in happiness beyond the grave, the union with all that is sacred in the eternal and in the infinite. But this golden talisman would have been handed to you in a tin capsule of dogmas, and you, like so many others to whose riper taste and judgment the capsule no longer appealed, would have flung the whole thing away, contents and cover; or, like so many others, you would have only clung to the outward wrapping as a kind of symbol, as a ceremonial necessity.

At the present time, in this country, it is a part of good form to be pious. By assiduous church attendance, by friendly intercourse with the clergy, by scorn and contempt for all free thinking, one tickets one's self as belong-

ing to fine society. They are mere forms, to be sure, but how can the man and the woman of society differentiate themselves from the ordinary mass of humanity if not by the observance of forms? Signing the cross, as one sits at table, — the way it is done of late in aristocratic houses, — is not a mark of reverence, but a "correct" gesture — equal to the conventional court curtsy.

I would not wish to imply that there are not actually honest believers who in spite of the tin capsule penetrate to the golden center of the talisman and are thereby elevated and strengthened. "Be good!" is certainly the profoundest meaning of every religious imperative — honor to the man who with voluntary obedience listens to this commandment by reason of his faith.

You were not educated in a nunnery — as I happen to know. Do you possess that fervent Something, by means of which a person is raised above all the eventualities of life and above one's self? That I do not know. Let me explain to you what I understand by this "Something": let me be for half an hour your catechist!

This is the mystery: — Recognize as your home, that is to say as the place to which you belong, a domain larger than your house, than your family, than your parish, than your earth — the universe. You belong to it: it belongs to you. Religionists have an inkling of this truth and they call it "the fatherhood of God." Science has investigated it and here it is called "indestructibility" and "homogeneity of matter" and "eternal conservation of all energy." This guarantees you immortality. The part that you play in the great world-drama is important, just as every one else's is, and it is never played to the end.

Do not shrug your shoulders and say: "What is the use of a continued existence if, in another life, I do not remember the former; if my ego has disappeared?" Certainly "*your*" ego, in its present form, is lost, but in the new form you will feel an ego in similar degree. Is your consciousness, your inner sense of life, lessened by the fact that you do not remember the existences through which

you have passed in the infinity behind you? The past ego was not "another one," nor will the ones that follow be, — they all are a part of the same ego of the universe, divided billions and trillions of times. If one has learned to feel one's self as a constituent of the eternal circle of life, if one knows that one is akin to the plants and the stars, if one feels in one's inmost soul the sparks flashing from the flame of the Universal Spirit, then one is penetrated by the sense of being a child of God just as much as a nun kneeling in prayer on the stone flags.

Yet these are only impulses for especial exalted hours — not at all times can one feel consecrated to the All. But there are also narrower circles into which one can enter and escape one's own egotistical loneliness — any kind of a great community. For some, it is found in art; for some in the various so-called "Movements," or political campaigns, or even revolutions; either in active cooperation or mainly in intense sympathy: in either case one will be elevated above the everyday pettinesses and ennuis of one's own existence, if it be petty and tiresome, aye, if it be full of sadness! Listen, Franka, to the roaring of the stream of Time; see how human society is striving to attain new goals, how it is engaged in the battle with the powers of the traditional — to acquire more light, more freedom, more righteousness; in a word, more happiness.

A mighty aid to this uplift of souls is found in the technical marvels with which human invention is every day transforming this world. We live in a great, great age! Especially great, not so much in what is as in what is to be! To think of sharing in it all! Do not miss the noble enjoyment which every bold ascent is preparing! And even if you yourself cannot attain a height, then rejoice in the lofty flights of humanity. "Soaring" — the word was formerly applied to us men only figuratively, but now — you know what happened only a few days ago — for the first time a man flew over the Channel . . . and these surprises, these triumphs will be enlarged. . . . Look and

listen! Show yourself — let us all show ourselves — worthy of having been born under the glory of the twentieth century. . . .

Here the letter abruptly ended. It was not difficult to guess from whom it came: only Mr. Helmer could have been its author. Had any definite address been attached to it or an answer been demanded, perhaps Franka would have sent a letter in return. She had hardly given a thought to the young secretary since she no longer had occasion to meet him. After the receipt of this letter, however, which she read from beginning to end several times, it was natural that her thoughts should turn frequently to Chlodwig Helmer. What especially moved her was that something of the spirit of her father seemed to breathe through this letter — there was the same trend of thought and at the same time almost the same use of words and phrases. This was not strange, for where ideas coincide, there must be a similarity in expression of them; every philosophy of life has its own terminology. Above and beside all the abstract ideas contained in the letter there was also the striking of a note which awakened a melodious echo: — the five words, "I am fond of you"! — Then it happened, apparently in consequence of his statement that she had appeared to him in a dream, that she also two or three times dreamed of him, and wonderful! — in the dream his face was not homely — not at all, but rather fascinating. No second letter followed, the dreams were not continued, and the whole incident gradually grew faint and indefinite.

INTERMEZZO

DURING all this time Mr. John A. Toker had been elaborating his plan. In his brain, that which he proposed to do was already formulated. Certainly he knew that everything destined to come into existence will, as soon as it has sufficient vitality, begin to live, develop itself, branch out, and be changed in a hundred different ways which its creator is unable to foresee; yet the initial stage was clearly outlined before Mr. Toker's inner eye. The motives and ends, which at first had risen before him mistily and indefinitely, he had long since supplanted with clear and precise formulas. The whole was drafted into two pieces of manuscript: one of them a letter, the other a circular. A copy of each was now to be sent to the addresses of those famous contemporaries whose names he had inscribed on the day when the project was conceived. Now a few names had disappeared from the list and a few others were added to it.

THE LETTER

DEAR SIR (*or* MADAM):

I am doing myself the honor of inviting you most cordially to spend the first half of next June as my guest: not in my American home, but in the center of Europe, at Lucerne, where I am making suitable preparations for entertaining you and my other guests. You will find the names of other persons invited indicated in the inclosed list. Any one in your family or your household whom you

would like to have as a companion will be most welcome. The traveling expenses and, if agreeable, a considerable honorarium will be supplied by me. The inclosed circular will sufficiently show that this invitation is not for a mere summer visit for personal ends, but includes coöperation in a civilizing work of the greatest moment.

Counting upon your favorable answer, I am,

Yours respectfully,

JOHN A. TOKER.

THE PROSPECTUS

We are on the threshold of the aëronautic age. What mankind, up to the present time, and especially in the last two or three decades, has accomplished in the realm of technic is simply fabulous — is the triumphant annihilation of the antiquated concept "Impossible."

And this is to go on in constantly accelerating progress. How feeble in their first beginnings, how widely separated from one another in time and space have been the great inventions and discoveries. And now! Scarcely a day passes without some technical improvement being simultaneously achieved in different places. The rapidity of progress results in one marvel making another possible. Thus, to take only one example, the dirigibility of the air-balloon was attained only because automobilism had created the light motor.

The intellectual and moral uplift of humanity has not kept up with the technical. This is plainly seen in a single paragraph the reading of which gave me the impulse to make the proposed experiment. The paragraph read: "The dirigible balloon is destined to become the chief weapon in wars to come."

This is equivalent to saying: "We will use the latest triumph of victorious civilization for the confirmation of the most antiquated barbarism." — This must not be!

What the physicists, the chemists, the engineers have given us, one depending on another, each building a little

higher on the discoveries of his predecessors, what they have done through comprehending and controlling the forces of nature and making them our servants, is on the point of changing one half — the material half — of our world into a realm of magic.

But how does it stand with the spiritual half, the immaterial half? The unhappiness of men, the wickedness of men, the mutual hatreds of men, — these ghastly things give the answer to the above question: the spiritual half is still far, far behind. The everlasting forces which rule in this other half, and which, when they come to be known, controlled, and made useful, would be able to change this half also into a realm of magic: at the present time they are as yet concealed and inactive.

The engineers, mechanicians, and technicians of the moral forces are the poets and prophets, the philosophers and artists; they are the dynamic agents of thought, the leaders of intellect, the pathfinders in the jungles of social institutions, the aviators in the eternal sphere of ideas! Yet they are scattered through the centuries, scattered in space. One lives in New York; another in Paris; the third at Yasnaya Polyana; their names go from the élite in one land to the élite in other lands, but do not reach the masses. How much more powerful their work would be if it were coördinated, if the knowledge of their doctrines, the glory of their names, the magic of their art, proceeding from one central point, should radiate in all directions. *Motors and propellers have taught us that power must be concentrated and compressed, in order — by explosions — to drive the vehicle.*

THE ROSE-WEEK IN LUCERNE

This festival-time, which in my opinion will surpass in outward glory all the previous "aviation meets," all the Wagner festivals in Bayreuth, all the carnivals in Rome or Cologne, all the regattas at Kiel or at Cowes, all the races at Baden-Baden, will last with its public functions

from the eighth until the fifteenth of June. The period from the first till the eighth belongs to my guests for uninterrupted social intercourse. I believe that my great contemporaries will thus find unique opportunity for high social enjoyment, for the most fruitful inspiration. How rarely is it vouchsafed for those who stand on the eminences of Humanity to consort with their fellows!

The second week will belong to the public, which will have the unique enjoyment of seeing and hearing the laurel-crowned of all countries assembled in the same place and of absorbing the lofty thoughts which will flow from their words.

The attendance at the lectures and art performances will in all probability be immense.

But what my guests will have to say is not to be limited to those present. The echo of it will ring through the whole world. The great journals will certainly send their representatives who will telegraph long extracts from the various addresses. And involuntarily the Press will in this way fulfill what ought to be its most important function: to further the great universal interests of mankind instead of stirring up international strife and cultivating local gossip. But we will not depend on them: we ourselves will institute a large and complete staff of secretaries and translators; we will employ a printing-office and have the principal addresses set forth *in extenso*, and send them out as pamphlets to all parts of the world. And still more: gramophones will catch the very intonations of the speakers, kinematographs will reproduce the gestures of the orators, and the records and films will be sent out to thousands of schools and settlements all over the world. In all regions and in all classes shall be scattered the messages of the *Rose-Week!*

What the men and women whom I have in mind will say, is not for any particular race or class: its sole aim and object will be, "to elevate all humanity."

And why roses?

That I have chosen out of the twelve months of the

year the month of roses, that I am going to conduct the whole arrangement under the emblem of roses — all the programmes, all the invitations, and so forth, will be adorned with these flowers; on the buildings and festal arches roses will be garlanded as escutcheons — a sardanapalian abundance of living, blooming roses will be entwined around all the pillars, will adorn the tables and walls; bushes blooming with roses and rose-beds will be planted in the grounds — intoxicating perfume of roses will fill all the air — a rose-bacchanal: all this is not, perhaps, a whimsical fancy, an ostentatious piece of extravagance such as the multimillionaires of Fifth Avenue are accustomed to vulgarize their festivities with; — a deeper symbolism is involved in it: the whole undertaking is to stand under the protection and the shelter of Beauty!

CHAPTER V

COUNT SIELEN'S WILL

THE gloomy autumnal sense of depression, which had settled down on Franka's mind and the whole of Sielenburg, grew ever deeper. Death was making his entrance into the castle. For more than a week the sick count's passing away had been expected from hour to hour. The physicians had expressed their opinion that it was inevitable and immediately at hand. At Countess Adele's suggestion the priest had already been summoned in order to administer extreme unction to the man who lay unconscious in his bed; the warder of the tower was ready at a moment's notice to raise the black standard, and the sexton of the adjacent church was only waiting for the signal to ring the passing-bell.

Franka ventured several times to enter the sick-room which was now a death-chamber, and the moans which came from the bed, and mingled with the storm howling without in an unspeakably melancholy dirge, rang incessantly in her ears, even after she had left the room and repaired to her own, which was situated in the other wing of the castle, where the wind could not be heard.

Here she was now sitting in the dark, — it was about seven o'clock in the evening, — and was thinking of her own father's death, which so short a time before had left her an orphan. Now, by the

loss of her grandfather, she would be once more quite friendless in that house. Her tears flowed for the poor departed father, for the poor departing count, and likewise for the poor deserted maiden — for herself.

Suddenly she pricked up her ears. In the prevailing silence she heard a distant commotion: the opening and shutting of doors, hurrying footsteps, voices. . . . With a throbbing heart she sprang up and turned on the light. At the same instant her maid came hurrying into the room.

"What has happened? . . . My grandfather? . . ."

"Yes, Miss Franka; the count has passed away!"

On the morning after the funeral, which was conducted with imposing state, the Countess Adele sent for Franka.

"I have summoned you, my dear child, to have a few serious words with you. Sit down."

"What can this mean?" queried Franka in some perturbation.

"You have shown deep and, as it seems to me, genuine sorrow at the death of my poor brother."

"Oh, yes, I loved him so!"

"And you were right, for he was very kind — perhaps a little too kind to you. He has not left you unprovided for. His will has not been opened as yet, but I know about it, for he told me before you came that he intended to leave you a legacy of forty or fifty thousand crowns. That is a very neat little fortune. It is enough to cover the bond and you can marry an officer. Besides, that is your natural

vocation — to marry. You could not be a canoness because you have bourgeois blood; and since you have bourgeois blood, you can have no claim to marriage in our class. Of course, you will not think of remaining at the Sielenburg. Here you would have no opportunity . . . and you do not get along very well with us. I have never referred again to that fatal matter of the books, but the sting remains. . . . At all events, I would not think of casting you off. After all, you are my beloved brother's granddaughter — he recognized you as such . . . so you are not to sink back into the sphere in which you were brought up. Therefore, Cousin Albertine and I have decided that she — Cousin Albertine — should take charge of you. She lives in Teschen — a little city in Silesia. A very large garrison is quartered there, and no doubt, as soon as it is known that you possess the necessary amount, you will have suitors among the officers, for you are a pretty girl. One should not depend too much on mere physical beauty; still it is a recommendation — especially in matrimonial affairs. . . . Albertine remained unmarried simply because she was excessively homely . . . that is still very evident. You will be very comfortable at her house — she keeps up a very nice establishment — all the officers' wives attend her 'At Homes,' and young men will not stay away as soon as it is known that the pretty niece is not quite without means. But you must take great care not to give utterance to such anti-military views as are preached in another terrible book which we found in your room — 'Das Rote Lachen' — what a title! However, Aunt

Albertine will instruct you in the proper rules of behavior. As you know, she is very plain-spoken, for she is extraordinarily frank — but that should never offend you! She means it for your best good."

Franka let the old lady talk on, and did not make a sign. Formerly she would have rebelled against much that her aunt said, especially against the expressions, "sink back into the sphere in which she had been brought up"; but now, on the day after the count's burial she would have no quarrel with his sister. She keenly felt that she could not exist in the "sphere" to which they were trying to elevate her; she had decided to depart from the Sielenburg and to refuse Aunt Albertine's offer. If it was true that her good grandfather had so generously remembered her, — the amount mentioned seemed to her a very considerable sum, — she was protected against poverty, and was her own mistress. And even if there was no legacy for her, she would prefer to go out into the world and obtain some situation. Anything but this state of dependence! Anything but this moral dungeon!

"Well, what do you say to this?" said the aunt in conclusion, after she had gone on in the same tone for some time.

"Excuse me, at present I have nothing to say. I am so affected by the sad occurrences of the last few days — I really cannot answer."

"Very good; go back to your room again. I certainly appreciate that you are quite unstrung, first from grief at your grandfather's death and also by joy at the brilliant prospects which I have disclosed

to you. . . . So, then, we will take up the subject another time. There is no hurry — Aunt Albertine will not return to Teschen for six weeks; till then you can remain here."

Franka stood up. "May I go?"

"Yes, but at three o'clock this afternoon come to the green salon. At that time we are to meet there and Dr. Fixstern, who has Eduard's will, is to read it. As you are probably mentioned in it, you should attend the meeting."

At the specified hour all the members of the family present at the castle assembled in the "green salon." Besides the Countess Adele, Miss Albertine, and Cousin Coriolan, there were a few distant relatives who had come to the Sielenburg for the funeral. Franka entered last and took her place in a chair by the wall near the doorway. The others sat in a semicircle in front of the table where Dr. Fixstern was engaged in taking documents out of a portfolio.

"Are all the persons concerned present?" he asked after he had taken his seat in the armchair.

"Yes, all are here," answered the Countess Adele. "You may proceed, Doctor."

Great excitement was visible in the features of those in the semicircle. They were all more or less pale and breathless. The doctor straightened his spectacles and began: —

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have here the testament of my honored patron and client, Count Eduard von Sielen, and I will now read it before the assembled family. For more than twenty years, I have had the

honor of serving as the attorney and agent of the late count. It is, therefore, only natural that he should have put into my hands the will which I and my solicitor have signed as witnesses, and that he should have designated me as his executor. I am fully acquainted with the condition of his affairs and I have an inventory of all the real estate and personal property which he has left. Here it is: if you will grant me permission, I will first put this fully before you.

"The count's property was larger than might have been supposed from his comparatively modest scale of living. It consists: (1) Of the domain of Sielenburg in Moravia, of Grossmarkendorf in Lower Austria, and of Hochberg in Carinthia. These possessions amount altogether to 8700 acres of land and are unencumbered; (2) the Sielen palace on the Wieden in Vienna; (3) bank-deposits in English and national banks amounting nominally to two million five hundred thousand crowns. I have also a complete list of the jewels, silver plate, paintings, and furniture to be found in the various castles, in the Vienna palace, and also in storage. And now I will proceed to the reading of the will."

The excitement in the semicircle had grown still more intense, and while the lawyer was breaking the seal of the envelope and unfolding a large sheet of parchment, one might have heard the beating hearts of those in the assembly.

Dr. Fixstern cleared his throat a second time and read in a loud voice: —

"This is my last will.

"I commend my soul to God.

"Since my property is not entailed, I am free to dispose of it in accordance with my best judgment.

"I make my disposition as follows: I nominate as my universal legatee my granddaughter, Franka Garlett."

At this all uttered an "Ah!" which was more like a shriek than an exclamation. Cries of astonishment, of disillusionment, of indignation, of dismay. Only the cry of joy was lacking, for Franka had sprung to her feet, mute with terror, and then instantly sank back again. She would have preferred to run away — to her father, that she might bring to him this astounding piece of news! — to her grandfather that she might thank him. . . . But they were both dead. Here among the living there was no one who would look on her with anything but envy. Then before her mind arose the thought of her anonymous correspondent whose tender word had flown to her: "I am fond of you" . . . If only he were by her side . . . !

A moment passed before the general stupefaction had subsided, and Dr. Fixstern could proceed. Now followed various bequests. All the relatives, even the most distant, were remembered with larger or smaller legacies; for the functionaries and servants were bequests either in money or in pensions; various charitable institutions were also remembered. Mr. Chlodwig Helmer, "whose character I have learned to value very highly," received a valuable ring; Dr. Fixstern as the executor received a handsome legacy. After the bequests were paid, the property descending to the residuary legatee would

be diminished by not far from a million crowns. After he had finished reading the document, Dr. Fixstern arose and went to Franka, who was still sitting near the entrance to the salon, and made a low bow: —

"Miss Garlett, receive my congratulations: you are the mistress of Sielenburg."

The others came also and congratulated her with bitter-sweet looks. Franka was still, as it were, stunned.

"It seems to me," she said, "as if I ought to ask the forgiveness of you all"; and the tension of her nerves gave way in a spasmodic fit of weeping.

Aunt Albertine began to busy herself tenderly with her: —

"Come, come; I will conduct you to your room . . . you must recover from the shock . . ."

The way from the green salon to Franka's chamber was through a suite of salons down the long corridors, up the monumental staircase; and this way, which she had so often taken, now seemed to her wholly new — it was all her own property, her realm. . . . Under Miss Albertine's affectionate guidance she reached her room, but there she asked to be left alone for a while — she desired to rest, she felt so unstrung. . . .

"Yes, my darling, now get a good rest. I will go." Franka locked the door as soon as Miss Albertine had left the room. No one must disturb her — she wanted to be alone with her great destiny. She drew deep audible sighs just as one does after climbing a mountain-peak. Indeed, it was a peak to which she

had been elevated — a dizzy peak. What possibilities lay open before her — what duties must she fulfill! Like a flash of lightning the thought went through her mind: "I must accomplish something!"

What?

That she knew not. This thought was only a germ: but she felt that something would come to fruition. A voice seemed to say to her: "Franka, something great, something marvelous has happened to you"; and in the depths of her soul came her answer: "I will be worthy of this marvelous thing."

"Be worthy?" Where had she seen or heard that word lately? Oh, yes, now she remembered: she took from her writing-table Helmer's letter — there it was. "Show yourself — let us all show ourselves — worthy of having been born under the glory of the twentieth century. . . ."

Some one knocked at the door. Franka put the letter back into the drawer and went to open the door.

The Countess Adele entered. "So you wanted to rest after your being so startled? Yes, it is startling, to be sure. . . . Who could ever have imagined! — I must have a little talk with you about it. . . . We must have a clear understanding as to what is to be done now."

She sat down, and Franka, resigning herself, took a seat. What would Aunt Adele have to say now? Probably a whole series of suggestions and counsels. . . . But in her heart the purpose stirred: "I will do what I please."

"Well, aunt," she said aloud, "let us talk. It is

truly an unexpected, overpowering stroke of Fatè. I am still perfectly dazed by it."

"I can believe you. Now everything is changed. Nothing more needs to be said about the plan of your going to Teschen which we discussed this morning. Albertine, of course, would be only too glad to have you come to her — she told us so before — but there would be no sense in it; — you will remain with me at the Sielenburg — until you are married."

"And whom am I going to marry?"

"That will take care of itself. You will not lack suitors, now that you are a brilliant match. You would bring your husband several landed estates, a palace, and a considerable sum of money. Your choice must fall on a solid, sensible man who understands the careful management of property. I could suggest one to you, but it is premature to talk about it as yet. But in the mean time we shall keep up the establishment, have some great hunting-parties, and the right person will come at the right moment. Of course, for the present we shall live secluded — you see we shall be in mourning for a year, and it would not do at all to go into society during these twelve months. But you can utilize the time by trying to cultivate good manners. You are so lacking in what is required for the rank which you will take in our circle . . . I will invite two young nieces to come here as companions for you, and you can improve your ways by observing how they behave, and then you can obtain from them good sound ideas — the dear girls have been educated in the Sacré Cœur Convent and are very religious and '*comme il faut*'

in their opinions. Yet at the same time they are merry as becomes their age and yours. . . . And if you wish to keep these rooms as yours, it will be all right. Or, if you like, I can have prepared for you the apartments that belonged to your mother and which have been unoccupied since her flight. You need have no care concerning the housekeeping — in the first place, you do not understand anything about it, and, besides, I have been in charge of it for years. And naturally you know nothing about managing the estate. . . . But we have an excellent intendant and Cousin Coriolan will gladly have an eye to the direction of affairs and take charge of the accounts. I will talk with Dr. Fixstern about the management of your property — of course, you know nothing about that either, and so you need not have any bother about all that. For your own little expenditures — toilet, charities, and so forth — I will allow you suitable pocket-money. Are you listening to me? You look so *distraite*."

"I? Oh, yes, I have heard you."

"Well, and what have you to say?"

"I have nothing at all to say to-day. As you just remarked, it is too soon. I must first collect my thoughts."

"Well, you need not think and worry. Experienced people are here to relieve you. So we will talk no more about these things now — 'To-morrow is another day.' Adieu for now, and do not be too late in coming down to dinner."

"I should like to be excused for to-night, aunt. I am going to bed very shortly."

"That is a good idea; then I will have your dinner sent up to you. Have a good night's sleep and wake up to-morrow fresh and rested. You look so scared — not at all like the lucky creature that you are; and do not forget to fall on your knees and thank the good God for pouring out such a blessing on you."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Franka aloud, as soon as she was alone. And then she began to laugh. The humor of the thing had not escaped her. That very morning the countess had said to her that, of course, her further stay at the Sielenburg was not to be thought of, and now the old lady was willing to let her stay "with her," and would undertake the management of her whole future — a future which lay before her so great, so enigmatical, so full of power and magnificence — a future opening out before such duties and possibilities. Again her mind turned to the as yet unformulated germ of plans half-conceived — such as Aunt Adele, in her narrow horizon, had never even dreamed. No, no, this proposed tyranny must be shaken off as speedily and as decisively as possible. Franka felt that she had the courage and the power to do so, although she was alone.

Alone in this *milieu*, yes; but she felt as if she had comradeship and support in the world outside, in the hovering spirit of her father, in the souls of those new men who were striving for lofty aims, in — how had Chlodwig Helmer expressed it? — in community with all that is holy in the eternal and the infinite. . . . All she needed was freedom, and this was now brought to her by her wealth; also by the fact that

no sort of tradition or duty bound her to the environment in which it was planned to asphyxiate and strangle her, if she could not tear herself away from it. But she could and she would. . . . She was mistress of the Sielenburg, and what was most precious to her — she was mistress of herself.

The following morning she sent for Dr. Fixstern to come to her. She asked him to explain to her once more her rights and her title in the property. Then she told him of the Countess Schollendorf's proposals and of her own firm resolve not to accept them. She was greatly relieved to find that Dr. Fixstern was not at all on the side of the countess, as she had feared, but wholly on hers. He was righteously indignant at the old lady's presumption; and when Franka told him of her proposal to dole out to the unrestricted possessor of millions a limited sum of pocket-money he laughed heartily.

The conference lasted some time. Franka had many questions to ask and Dr. Fixstern had also many things to tell her, many explanations, much good advice to give her. Only after the estate had been fully settled would the exact amount of her fortune be known, but in the mean time she would be able to get some idea of what she would have by glancing over the inventory that he had with him; and he read to her the figures representing the income and the payments which would have to be deducted from it. Franka listened with increasing delight as she began to comprehend what enormous wealth had fallen into her lap. The joyous sensation of the discoverer of a treasure filled her heart. For the very

reason that she had gone through the school of poverty and deprivation, she was now able to appreciate the value of riches, and she had already got an inkling of the independence, the esteem, and the enjoyment which her property was to vouchsafe her.

At the same time, as a sort of absolution from the sin of pride in possession, she cherished the consciousness that she should make use of the power that had come to her for something noble and grand and daring.

Franka expressed her desire to go that very winter to Vienna and take up her residence in her palace. Dr. Fixstern entirely acquiesced, and declared that he and his wife would do everything to aid her; he assured her that she might depend upon him in every way; the long devotion which he had showed to the late count he was ready now to show the granddaughter.

CHAPTER VI

A SECOND ANONYMOUS MESSAGE

CHLODWIG HELMER was writing the last act of his drama. He was well satisfied with his work. But he knew how wide and perhaps impossible was the gulf between the finishing of a theatrical piece and its production. Yet even as it was, he felt his heart swell with that comfortable sensation which every creative artist experiences when he succeeds in clothing in definite form that which has hovered in his mind.

Ever since Helmer had left the Sielenburg, he had occupied himself exclusively with literary work. His dismissal had come to him very unexpectedly. One morning Count Sielen had received him with these words: —

"My dear Helmer, I have something to say to you. . . . During the two years since you have been with me, I have become very fond of you. You are a fine, sensible fellow, you have irreproachable manners — I have no fault, absolutely no fault to find with you and yet — do not be surprised — I am giving you your congé. . . . Do not ask my reasons, but I give you my word of honor that you are not to blame for my taking this step. As a proof that I feel for you something more than good will, I am going to give you recommendations as hearty as you could desire. You will secure a place ten times better than

this; and in order that you may have opportunity to look about and to choose I am handing you a check for a sum sufficient for you to live two years free from anxiety. . . . No, no! do not protest: you must accept it out of love for me . . . in order to console me. It is painful enough for me to lose you. . . . In fact, I need the services of a physician rather than of a secretary . . . but I shall miss you keenly, and I do not want to have the additional sorrow of knowing that you are worried; it is not always easy to find a place and you must not take the first that offers — in short, you dare not refuse to do this favor for your old sick friend."

Helmer also had not found it easy to leave the count. A few days after this peculiar notice and after a very affectionate leave-taking from the old man, he departed from the castle of Sielenburg. He had no opportunity to say good-bye to Franka: on the day of his departure she had gone for a visit in the neighborhood with the Countess Adele. Better so — the farewell would have been hard for him. And perhaps it was better, on the whole, that he was going away, for he would otherwise have been certain to fall desperately in love with the beautiful girl. Already he felt that he had partly lost his heart to her — so it was best as it was. He settled down in one of the suburbs of Vienna where he proposed to devote himself to literary work for a time. Perhaps, if he should succeed, he might exclusively follow this career.

He took up his abode in a villa situated amid green vegetation. He had easy access to his beloved forest; if he desired to go to the city it was a short and

speedy trip by the cars. There he frequently visited his boyhood friend, Baron Franz Bruning—the one to whom he wrote the long letter from the Sielenburg and who now had a Government position. Not that Helmer found any especial enjoyment in this intercourse. The character and nature of his early playmate had developed in a direction which was simply uncongenial to him. But old associations always form a bond not easily broken. He also associated with a few young people in literary and artistic circles. Nevertheless, he rarely, at most only twice a week, went to town; for his work kept him fast in his voluntary isolation.

"Curtain!" Now the last scene of the drama was completed and he wrote the word "Curtain" with a joyful sigh of relief. He was startled from the agreeable relaxation of the moment by a knock at the door. He shouted, "Come in!" and there entered a very elegantly dressed man of medium stature with a highly colored, full-moon face adorned with a tiny black mustache.

"Ah, is it you, Franz?"

"Yes, I had to hunt you down in your den — if for nothing else, to talk with you about the astonishing news."

"What news?"

"Give me a cigar first. Thanks! I mean the news from Sielenburg."

"I know nothing about it."

"Do not you read your paper, man alive?"

"I confess I have been so busy the last few days

with my work that I have scarcely glanced at the papers."

"And you did not know that the old count is dead?"

"Dead!" exclaimed Chlodwig, in a tone of genuine concern. "How? When?"

"A few days ago — and his granddaughter, Miss Franka, whom you admired so much, is left universal legatee. . . . She seems to have succeeded in making good. . . . Have not you a chance there? She would be a match!"

Chlodwig was dumb with astonishment. He was, indeed, glad that such a piece of extraordinary good fortune had befallen the charming young lady; but one thing he contemplated with horror — the crowd of fortune-hunters that would surround her.

"If you had been a foxy fellow," pursued the other, "you would have turned the girl's head — but, of course, you could not have foreseen what was to happen to her."

Without paying any attention to these observations, which seemed to him forced in their humor, Chlodwig said: —

"This news moves me deeply . . . the poor count . . . and the granddaughter . . . a remarkable romance! . . . Where did you read all this?"

"In the 'Presse'; three days ago the report of the count's death, and this morning, the will."

Chlodwig glanced through the papers lying on his table and found the paragraphs.

"Are you not going to condole with the orphan so cruelly robbed of her grandpapa?"

Chlodwig shrugged his shoulders. Bruning's tone was particularly disagreeable to him to-day.

Franz stood up. "But I must look around a little . . . you are charmingly situated. . . . What a view out over the open . . ."

From the window he went to the bookcases.

"Look! look! — what a swarm of poets: Stefan George, Hofmannsthal, Dehmel, Liliencron, Swinburne, Rostand. . . . Verses, verses, verses. . . . Well, as you yourself are a poet, of course you must wade through them all. . . . I cannot read more than two lines of rhyme at one fell swoop . . . everything exaggerated goes against my very soul . . . a hundred, or say fifty, years ago, in the romantic epoch, such things were at least permissible; in these days all this seems false to our prosaic world, which is avid of money and power, and it finds no echo. To win the battle, one must force one's way through with one's elbows. As far as I am concerned, one may indulge in a little wooing and cooing, but no romances. . . . And what have you there! Technical journals about airships and the technic of aviation? Does that interest you? I can understand that. The thing can be taken in earnest: a new sport, a new weapon, a new industry . . ."

"Nothing else?"

"Well, yes; also new regulations for insurance against aviation accidents."

He continued to rummage through the bookshelves — "Oh, yes, you have the novels of aërial warfare: Sand, Martin, Wells . . . those are mere phantasmagorias. One must stick to the truth. One

must learn to know and to despise men and things as they are — then can one best conquer them and make them useful. . . . But I see that you are not in the mood to discuss to-day: you are generally ready to go off half-cocked when I let some of my knowledge of the world shine upon you."

"Shine? — Your pessimism has about as much shine in it as a pair of snuffers . . . and snuffers, you know, are things not used in our day: they were good enough for tallow candles, but not for electric lamps and search-lights."

"Now I recognize you again, you incorrigible poet — truly I can find no harsher expression. You will be breaking your dainty wings bravely in our rough reality, you — there now, I have invented still another insult — you cloud-dweller! But I will no longer beard you in your own den . . . besides, I have no time — you live horribly far away from the boundaries of civilization. Let us see you before long. . . ."

When he was left alone, Chlodwig sat down again at his writing-table and attempted to read over the last act of his just-completed drama, in order to put in some last touches. But he could not fix his mind on it. His thoughts kept flying to the old count's deathbed and to the remarkable vicissitude in Franka's fate. He felt impelled to speak to her, and so he took a sheet of paper and began to write without being certain whether he should send the letter or not.

Mistress of the Sielenburg, I salute you!

This time you have not appeared to me in a dream, but you are vividly visible before my inward eye. For I have

just heard what has happened to you, and I see you surrounded by a thousand perils and by as many — what is the opposite of perils? — I cannot find the right expression. . . . Well, as perils signify threatening misfortune, so here I mean "beckoning felicity."

In my previous letter I mentioned things which in gloomy days and ways might offer shelter and refuge in sorrow and poverty — things whereby one may win the power to rise above one's self. Now you are rich — superlatively rich. You can command everything that belongs among the so-called "amenities" of life: you are protected against cares and privations and humiliations. With your wealth you can escape innumerable forms of suffering; whether you can purchase the highest forms of enjoyment and pride in life — depends on the strength of your spirit.

Against the peril of wealth I suggest the same talisman as was contained in my former letter — to elevate yourself above yourself — to take hold on the life of the universe, on the efforts of humanity. The peril for the rich is in being drawn down into the abyss of the — ordinary. The banal duties of luxury waste time and stupefy the intellect. The attempt will be made by pleasure-seekers and pride-cankered people to whirl you away into social dissipations; smart hussars and dragoons will besiege you in order, by securing your hand, to get possession of estates where they can enjoy hunting and horse-racing, tennis and automobiling, bridge and flirting, and, if they chance to be aristocrats, will make you feel it bitterly that you are not presentable at court.

Yet I know well that life is so full of the unexpected, the uncalculated, and the marvelous, that such general warnings, such sermonizing, sounding as they do rather perfunctory, perhaps will find no application to what is before you. But I could not endure that you should be shunted over on that track where the society that surrounds you runs along empty of all lofty aims and deaf and blind to the mighty changes that are in preparation. . . .

I do not believe that the generation of our day has the time to run the cars of tradition over the rails of convention to the very end. There are ominous signs flashing along the horizon. New and unheard-of events are coming to pass — and soon! And they do not need come by a revolution. That also is an ancient and probably antiquated form of transformation. Quite new forms may make their appearance. It may be that the flashing yonder does not portend a tempest; perhaps it is only the twilight of a rising sun — a sun which none of us has seen as yet, for we are still only children of Barbarism's polar night which has lasted hundreds, — nay, not merely hundreds but thousands of years. I want to see you, Franka, among the heralds of the coming light, among those who are storming the cloudy walls behind which it is still concealed.

Do not believe that, because you are a woman and young and beautiful, such a part is not cast for you. The new day offers women also the right of fighting in the ranks, — or rather they are winning it for themselves, — and assuredly the old sagas gave them spears and shields — the Valkyrie also are young and beautiful — Hojo-to-ho! Heia-ha! Franka, become great, or at least *will* something great!

Mankind to-day — but so few realize it — stands at a turning-point more decisive than any in its previous history. This has often been said before — all the instigators of any political or scientific revolution have been accustomed to close their manifestoes with the ringing words: "A new era is beginning"; and yet things remained exactly as they were before. But now: — the mystery of the air — the uplift to the heights — that is going to change everything, everything that now goes under the name of civilization. This will make the distinction between the coming epoch and the present, one sharper than between any of the so-called epochs of history. Aye, everything, everything is to be changed, and in a tempo which will be related to the changes of earlier times

somewhat as an electric locomotive compares with a pedestrian's gait, or as a hurricane whirling up waterspouts compares with a summer breeze crinkling the surface of a pond. We shall not be able to stand against such a tempest. We shall be either borne upon its wings, or swept away by it.

A friend has just been scolding me as a "Poet," because I have the fault of using figures of speech and have the — to him — much worse fault of being an optimist. Do not be deceived by this, Franka. I am not unreasonable. It requires a far keener sense to perceive the aroma of beauty and goodness which penetrates the atmosphere of our lives than it does to behold only the harsh and hateful, or else to see it, even where it is not present. . . .

I cannot bring this letter to a close, so I will simply stop. . . .

That morning Franka received a very abundant mail, consisting of congratulations and letters of fealty from the various persons employed on the other estates that had become hers, begging letters of the most extraordinary pretensions from unknown persons, offers of commodities from all kinds of business houses; and among all the weeds one fresh bouquet — Chlodwig Helmer's second message to her.

She read the letter and read it again, and it gave her pleasure. What had hovered dimly before her inward vision — to dedicate her wealth to some great and noble purpose — was now put before her as a command: "Be, or at least *will*, something great." So then, there was one person who felt that she was capable of forming such a purpose and of carrying it out; and it was the same person whose ideas so completely coincided with her dear father's.

She determined to take the advice of Chlodwig Helmer, — for she had no doubt that he was the writer of the unsigned letter, — and to ask him what he considered the great work which she should go forth, armed with spear and shield, to accomplish. . . . Aye, it was true, he was rather inclined to speak metaphorically, but behind his metaphors there must be something actual and comprehensible: — he must tell her and answer her questions.

In the mean time, the letter served to confirm her in her as yet unformulated aspirations. First of all, she must escape from the nets and bonds which her great-aunt was anxious to throw around her. Up to the present time she had postponed making any explanation; now Chlodwig's letter gave her the impulse to declare her independence that very day. She was certain of Dr. Fixstern's practical coöperation.

When at luncheon-time she entered the small dining-room where the household were all assembled, she asked her aunt to grant her an interview as soon as they had finished the meal.

"That will be perfectly convenient," replied Aunt Adele. "I also have a number of things that I want to say to you, and we must have a perfectly clear understanding regarding those things which we recently talked about."

They took their places at table. It was only a small company. The relatives that had come from a distance had taken their departure. Dr. Fixstern also had gone to Vienna, and only Miss Albertine, Cousin Coriolan, and the domestic chaplain were

present besides Franka and the countess. So far, the affairs of the household had gone on without alteration — Countess Adele held the reins, and no instructions were asked from Franka.

Winter had set in. The trees were leafless and the first fires were lighted.

"We shall soon have snow," remarked Coriolan. "Oh, how gay it used to be here in years gone by at this time of the year. . . . We always had great hunting-parties . . . a thousand hares on one day and often twenty or thirty guests at the hunting-dinner — and then a famous *jeu* till late at night. Listen, Franka, next year you must certainly give a hunting-party . . ."

"I will look out for that," remarked Countess Adele; "we shall keep up to the traditions of the Sielenburg. The Sielenburg Hunts were famous all over the country. So they were at our other estates."

"Yes, the late count — blessed be his memory — was very fond of hunting on his estate in Carinthia," said the reverend father; "there's a splendid run for stags."

"We let it this year," said the countess.

"Not to any manufacturer or Budapest Jew, I hope?" exclaimed Cousin Coriolan. "I'd rather have the game run wild all over the forest than permit unsuitable persons to hunt on a preserve, — and big game, too, — so that brokers might put up a sixteen-horned stag in their offices where they speculate over futures in the grain-market."

"Since you are talking about grain, Herr Baron," said the reverend father, "the price of flour has gone

up again and so have meat and milk. The poor people, especially in the cities, will soon be unable to exist. You will have an opportunity, Miss Franka, to practice charity. Truly, there is much poverty and the rising cost of provisions . . ."

"Who is at fault?" interrupted Coriolan. "The low classes no longer know what they ought to want. They want to have theaters and concerts, and there are always agitators who stir them up to discontent — unscrupulous people — the so-called leaders, always from the circle of the intellectuals, as the Freemasons and Jews like to call themselves. If some radical way is not adopted to put an end to this mob, I am in favor of driving them out, since it is against the law to shoot them down. . . ."

"But, Baron," said the reverend father soothingly, "that would be rather too drastic. The working-people are quite right in their desire to better their condition!"

"What is that? — 'better their condition' — believe me, your reverence, in the old days they were all far more content, the artisans as well as the peasants. My father and my grandfather always used to tell how much better things were before 1848 than they are now. The common people were under the protection of the nobles . . . they were happy and satisfied and industrious, and they had no thought of the foolish nonsense which is now preached to them — equal rights and the like. They were far happier, indeed, they were. Moreover, times are growing worse and worse. A firm government must take a hand and lock up these pestilen-

tial babblers on the Franzensring — the Minister-President ought . . ."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Coriolan, don't begin to talk politics again," exclaimed Miss Albertine. "It is almost rude to do so in the presence of ladies. You know we are not interested in such things, because we don't understand them at all, and we don't want to understand them."

"I am talking with the chaplain . . . you are at liberty to talk about your own feminine trash . . ."

"Feminine trash, indeed! How coarse you are! I must tell you frankly that your manners often are very objectionable! Do not be offended with me, but I make the observation for your own best good."

After luncheon Countess Schollendorf invited Franka to accompany her to her room.

"Here we shall be quite undisturbed. . . . There . . . now tell me what you have to say."

She had sunk down on her little sofa, near which stood a small work-table. She took up her knitting, for she was assiduous in her endeavors to provide the village children with knitted or crocheted caps and underwear. Franka took her seat in an armchair at the other side of the table. She was visibly agitated. Her mourning-gown accentuated the pallor of her face, and her mouth trembled slightly. It was not so easy for her to speak what was on her mind. To be sure, she had for several days gone over what she intended to say, and her intention was unshaken, but now, when the moment had come, she felt a certain awkwardness.

"Now let us have it. What is the matter with you?

You look quite disturbed, and at table you did not speak a word . . . are you not quite well? You look very pale. The way you dress your hair is not becoming to you . . . you must have it done in some other way. When one has such a head of hair one should wear it in braids, otherwise it looks disheveled."

"What I want to say to you, dear aunt, is this: I am going to Vienna to-morrow and I intend to take up my residence in my house on the Wieden and manage my own housekeeping. I shall take of the servants here only my maid; the rest may stay on with you, as I am going to leave you in charge of the Sielenburg so that you may manage it as long as you wish, just as you have done."

Countess Schollendorf dropped the red woolen jacket with its one completed sleeve into her lap. She was speechless.

Franka, whose courage was gradually coming back, continued: —

"The administration of my property I am putting into the hands of Dr. Fixstern, who has always enjoyed my grandfather's perfect confidence, and who made only one condition, that I should select a second assistant to share with him the labor and responsibility of this function."

"What does all this mean? Have you lost your wits? I do not understand you . . . you propose to go to Vienna . . . well, as far as I am concerned, I can go there perfectly well. The winter here is very gloomy. But, of course, this year I cannot take you out into society, for we are both in mourning. We should naturally take the servants with us — the

cook and the coachman; then only the castellan and a couple of housemaids would stay here . . . but leave all that to me."

"Excuse me, aunt. You did not understand me. I have invited you to consider the Sielenburg as your home."

"You — . . . me? . . . invited?"

"Yes, for I intend to keep house in Vienna myself and be my own mistress."

"You are going to live alone . . . you? A young thing like you . . . it is scandalous!"

"I am of age and perfectly independent, and I know how to manage my own life in such a way that no one will ever dare to apply the word 'scandalous' to me."

"What audacious language!"

"I will speak with perfect frankness. I propose to take charge of my own destiny. You lately explained to me that I was to accept from your hands a husband, a couple of lady friends, and also a little pocket-money . . . but I intend to choose my own husband or not marry at all; and as to my friends I shall be able to find them among those who have been brought up as I was and who think as I think. If we two should remain together, dear aunt, there would be an endless unprofitable battle. You would always be striving to remodel me, to educate me, to lay down all kinds of restrictions, and to enforce all sorts of commands; and I, on my side, should try to resist this whole guardianship, to escape from it, — and you would be vexed with me all the time, — in short, it would be for both of us a life of bitterness.

The separation cannot be painful to either of us, for I was not brought up here — I belong to another world of ideas, I have quite another view of life. We have lived together for only six months, and in that time neither of us has taken to the other; very often you have been annoyed with me, and likewise my whole nature has revolted against the attempted domineering. In spite of our relationship, we are still strangers. As for the respect due to the sister of my generous beloved grandfather, I shall certainly never fail in that . . ."

"You call this respect? I call it unheard-of impudence."

"You see how little we understand each other."

"I shall certainly not remain in Sielenburg if you arrogate to yourself the claim of being the mistress and allow me to stay here as a favor."

"I am not arrogating . . ." She stopped.

"You mean, you *are* the mistress, and I am your guest? Thank you most humbly."

"No, aunt. I certainly said the Sielenburg should be your home with all that it contains and all that appertains to it, and I am ready to grant you the use of it as long as you live — I mean for unrestricted use, that is to say, with all the revenues that belong to it . . . by legal contract."

The old lady hesitated. That was an attractive offer. For Franka herself she cared very little. Only a short time before she had, so to speak, proposed to expel her from the Sielenburg. She took up her knitting again and mechanically took a few stitches.

"We will think it over," she said after a while.

CHAPTER VII

FRANKA'S SALON

WITH the aid of Dr. Fixstern and his wife, Franka had established herself in the Vienna palace, having made first in the company of the doctor a trip to Lower Austria and Carinthia for the purpose of acquainting herself with her two other estates. The castles there were fully as sumptuous and seigneurial as Castle Sielenburg, even if not so comfortable and homelike, and the reason for this was that its owners had always preferred Schloss Sielenburg, while Grossmarkendorf and Hochberg generally stood empty. The lands and industries belonging to them were profitably rented, so that their administration would not occasion any care to the possessor. The fixed revenues were to be collected by the agent and by him turned over to her. When Dr. Fixstern informed her of the amount of the income, she had to suppress a cry of astonishment: so rich, so unboundedly rich she was now!

"I must deserve it — I must be worthy of this unheard-of good fortune — if I only knew how!"

She did not say that aloud. It was like a secret burden of indebtedness which she had to carry around with her. It would have to be paid — that was absolutely certain. Meantime, during this journey through her domains, she gave herself up to the

irresistibly joyful pride which the thought, "mine, mine," is wont to arouse in any heart.

She found the Vienna palace in perfect order; only a few slight alterations and refurnishings were necessary to render comfortable and tasteful her own suite of rooms. The domestics comprised the major-domo, who had been connected with the establishment for ten years, and his wife, who was installed as housekeeper. Franka had brought her own maid from the Sielenburg. The other servants were new people. Franka had also engaged a companion. Her name was Eleonore von Rockhaus, the daughter of a naval officer and the widow of a consul. She had seen much of the world, and was a perfect lady. Her age was about forty-five. Her hair was just beginning to turn gray, but she had a youthfully elastic figure, and delicate, friendly features; she was well read, almost an artist on the piano, an absolute mistress of French and English; — in short, she was a jewel of a companion and chaperon. Perhaps also she would prove to be a genuine friend, but as to that the future would tell. Provisionally, the two ladies were somewhat reserved in their intercourse . . . first of all, they had to learn to know each other.

Franka did not open her heart to Eleonore von Rockhaus. What was beginning to become a fixed idea — that the wealth lavished upon her as by a gift of good fairies must be spent for some great purpose, that she herself must labor with her whole soul, with all her energies, with all her gifts of body and mind, so as to confer upon the world some advantage, some great blessing — this dream, as yet vague

and unformulated, she did not confide to her companion. First she herself must go through a novitiate; in other words, test herself, acquire more knowledge, look about her, clarify her thoughts. She intended to question Helmer as to what reality there was behind the visions which he outlined in his letters. Yet even this she postponed. First she desired to gain some experience from intercourse with prominent men and women. To this end Dr. Fixstern might be useful to her. As a highly respected lawyer, he had a wide circle of acquaintances, among them scientists, artists, statesmen, and could bring the most interesting of them into the Garlett palace. As for "Society," Franka had no ambition at all. During the first year of mourning, following her grandfather's death, that, as well as attendance at concerts and theaters, would naturally be out of question; but besides, she felt no desire for it: she knew that it might divert her from the serious sacred duties to which she had consecrated herself, although without having as yet settled in her own mind what they should be.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon. The two ladies had come in from their daily walk in the Prater and were sitting in the little salon. A cheering warmth and a rosy glow radiated from the gas-log; the electric lights had not been turned on. It was pleasanter to rest and chat in the twilight.

"It is delicious here," said Frau von Rockhaus, leaning back in the comfortable armchair. "I look forward with dismay to the time, probably not very

distant, when you will be getting married and will no longer need me."

"I am not contemplating being married — at least, not for some time yet. . . . I like my freedom. Were you happy in your marriage, Frau Eleonore?"

"Not so very. My husband played me false with the most exotic women. Besides, he was quarrelsome and very arbitrary. And yet, I liked him well enough. That was unfortunate, because for that very reason I was tormented with jealousy and suffered from his stern and cold behavior."

"That seems to me the most terrible thing: an unloving or an unloved husband. I would only marry when I was certain that I loved the man with my whole heart, only when I knew that he was not after my money — but how can one know that? And then, besides, I cannot possibly marry yet awhile: I must remain my own mistress in order to accomplish a certain task."

"A task? What?"

"Oh, no matter — I am not talking about it as yet."

"The first and most important duty which a person, especially a young and pretty girl, has to fulfill is to be happy. Besides, what can a woman undertake and accomplish by herself? Of course, if we lived in England, you might become a Suffragette or join the Salvation Army, but here in Vienna? There would be a chance for you to join one of the ladies' committees in some charity organization, or to meander down into the slums and distribute harmless gifts, or catechise the children of the suburbs;

our circle of activities is so narrow! Only indirectly can we acquire any influence in public affairs, or even help direct the course of history — I mean when we exert power over some powerful man!"

"And what profitable work can this influential individual do, according to your idea?"

"Heavens! that I can't tell. Commonly she will have to secure high positions for her friends or . . ."

"Certainly," interrupted Franka; "commonly one does the common thing. But I am thinking of something different. . . . Play to me, Frau Eleonore; it is so lovely to hear music in the twilight."

Frau von Rockhaus went to the grand piano. "What shall it be? Also something out of the ordinary?"

"Yes, 'Isoldens Liebestod,' please."

A moment later the sweet, passion-swept chords were floating through the room. Franka closed her eyes. She breathed deeply. What she felt was a sort of anguish, for it was a longing, and, to tell the truth, a longing not for something out of the ordinary, but for the simplest and most commonplace thing which even the simplest and most commonplace maiden heart desires — Love! Yet what kind of a person must he be, should she ever meet him — the man who should be her Tristan?

She roused herself from her dreaming. "No, no," she said to herself as she had just said aloud: "I must remain my own mistress."

Indeed, there was not a single young man in her whole circle of acquaintance to whom she felt drawn, and, besides, she had no business to be wishing and

seeking for such a one . . . all her thoughts and feelings must be concentrated on the task that hovered before her.

The servant announced a caller. Frau Eleonore left the piano and turned on the electric lights. A second visitor followed the first, and then a third, and, before long, a little circle was gathered around Franka. Dr. Fixstern had brought to her a number of distinguished personages, just as she had wished — people who either had written successful books, or had played leading parts in parliament, or had delivered popular courses of lectures at the university, or who were famous as artists. There were also a few ministers of state and foreign diplomats. In short, Franka had good reason to expect that the conversation in her drawing-room would be most lively and interesting: discussions of learned topics, alternating with witty anecdotes and edifying observations. Yet she was gradually led to discover that the conversational capacity of society does not reach such a high level. Occasionally, indeed, stirring talk may occur in a salon, but only about as frequently as oases in a desert; the average conversation consists of sand and simooms, for even choice spirits sink down to the banal ground of ordinary topics, especially when in a larger circle of merely casual acquaintances: the weather, the latest theatrical gossip, the sensational news sprung in the morning papers, mingled with still tamer questions and comments on health, projects of travel, and the like. And then it is impossible to form a circle of nothing but prominent people. There will always

be an intermixture of cordially futile Nobodies. One cannot post on the front door the notice: "Admittance only for Somebodies!"

Now this afternoon the talk began to take a very interesting direction.

A distinguished dramatic author was telling about certain foreign colleagues whom he had met during a summer journey, and he was relating in his cleverest way characteristic anecdotes about their peculiarities. But first he was to describe the individuality of the most original of the present day — Bernard Shaw. He was interrupted by the arrival of new callers: Miss Albertine von Beck and the Baroness Rinski.

Not very agreeably surprised, Franka went to meet the new guests.

"You, dear Aunt Albertine?"

"I came to Vienna for a few days, and so of course I came to see you, and I am bringing with me a friend who is very desirous of making your acquaintance."

The Baroness Rinski was a little elderly lady of unprepossessing appearance. Her name was not unknown to Franka; she had frequently seen it in the social columns of the papers among the personages who stand at the head of various charitable organizations.

"I begged my friend to bring me to you, my dear Miss Garlett, as I place great hopes on your aid."

"If I had known that you were entertaining so many this afternoon," said Albertine, "we should have come at another hour. I also have a message

from Aunt Adele. But you do not look particularly well," she added in her most benevolent tone of voice.

"Please, come with me, aunt, and you also, Baroness, — here we can talk undisturbed"; and she led the two ladies to the remotest end of the salon. This seemed preferable to introducing the two ladies into the circle of the others; they could continue listening to the revelations concerning Bernard Shaw while she sacrificed herself to her new visitors. She certainly felt that she was a martyr as she sat down with the two and tried to be gracious.

"Well, what word did my great-aunt send to me?"

"She sends you her greeting. I think she is a very good woman — she no longer seems to be offended with you."

"But why should she be offended with me?"

"Well, if you will permit me to say so — for the way you got rid of us all. . . . But we will not talk about that now. Adele wanted me to tell you that you must come and visit her at Sielenburg — it would please her."

"Thank you. Perhaps I will, next spring." And, turning to the baroness, she said: "What do you wish I should help you about, Baroness?"

You must not disappoint her, Franka," suggested Albertine. "If you do what the Baroness Rinski is going to ask you, it will be for your own great advantage. You need something to occupy you and give you some object in life, something that will turn your great property to a good purpose."

Franka concealed her vexation. She had thought

that she was going to rid herself entirely of the Sielenburg protectorate, and now it was cropping up again. She could easily imagine what secret design the Baroness Rinski cherished. She had no objection to devoting large sums to charitable ends and she had already done much in that direction; yet on this score she preferred to act in accordance with her own judgment and her own impulse, and not after the prescription of others, and she certainly did not wish to be drawn into the game of charity as she happened to know it was played by the baroness. As a student of social economic literature under the wise direction of her father, she had won too deep an insight into the causes and the ramifications of human misery, not to know that if she spent her whole property in alms, it would be only a drop on a hot stone. The lever must be applied in a very different place, in order to eradicate the evil.

The little baroness took a few printed documents out of her hand-bag. "See, my dear young lady, here are the yearly reports of various societies on whose boards I serve." And she began with great volubility to describe the blessings afforded by these associations for the rescue of babies, the protection of the young, the guardianship of maidservants, and the care of elderly persons; and she wanted Franka to enroll herself as a patroness and undertake the office of president of a new society for providing food for needy school-children.

"There is nothing," she said in conclusion, "nothing which can better build a golden stair up to heaven than beneficence. And even here below one

gains recognition by it; and even if one does not belong to high society, it affords an opportunity to meet with ladies of high standing, and one may even expect to obtain the 'Elizabeth Order' of the third class."

Franka laughed and shook her head. "I am afraid that there is danger of slipping off the heavenly stairs if one has at the same time an eye for such earthly things. However, Baroness, send me the subscription-list of your associations — I will gladly put my name down according to my ability, but I will not accept any offices."

"Oh, I hope that I shall be able to change your mind."

Visitors taking their leave and the arrival of others, whose names were announced, rescued Franka. She was obliged to get up and abandon her place between the two ladies in order to devote herself to the departing and to the new-coming guests. The Baroness Rinski put her documents back into the bag: "Come, Albertine, we will call on your niece at another time, when she is alone. Let us say good-bye now."

Franka made no effort to detain them and accompanied them to the door. "Well, I shall look for the lists."

In the mean time the dramatic author had concluded his interesting anecdotes about the brilliant British author, and the conversation had become general, and was turning on the most unfortunate of all subjects: Austrian politics; the German-Bohemian linguistic disputes, Hungarian confusions and

disorders, trade compacts and frontier obstructions, new tariffs and increased prices, and all in a tone of complaint and lamentation, such as is generally used when great calamities or great crimes are discussed, as if the whole activity of the municipality, of the Parliament, and of the State consisted in accomplishing as much harm and causing as much discontent as possible. Franka said to herself: "If Cousin Coriolan were present, he would know of two simple means of relief: to expel the Jews and establish absolutism."

"Yes, you see, gentlemen and ladies," said a little stout man with shining eyeglasses and equally shining forehead which extended over to the back of his neck, "this is the way things stand . . ."

The others listened excitedly, for the speaker was a highly respected publicist, who, as was well known, enjoyed the confidence of influential political circles — in other words, of the ministers of internal and external affairs.

"We have reached a great crisis in the history of our country. Everything which you have been lamenting and criticizing is in reality in a very wretched condition. The dissensions among the nationalities, the passion for independence on the part of the Transleithan population, the dangers from the Irredentists, the activities of the Socialists, the quarrel over confession, and God knows what else — are things which make it seem as if we were a thoroughly disunited and crumbling state; and so many elements unfavorable to us or watching for our inheritance may be supposed to be all ready to

do us harm; and yet it has been already proved by the crisis in the Balkans that we are nevertheless a proud, brave, first-class power; proud of our strength and brave to the last degree; and that all petty internal quarrels will disappear when necessity arises to affirm ourselves against outside encroachments. Thus we have compelled respect . . . with our constituted power we have proved that we can act, that we can take hold together, that we will not allow ourselves to be moved by international tribunals and conferences, because we are ready to defend our rights, — or, if you please, our '*bon plaisir*' — with guns and ships. In presence of this resolute attitude, all the intrigues weaving against us went to smash. It came near war, I know that; the men on the General Staff were at fever heat to strike . . . the population was enthusiastic, ready for every sacrifice . . . and because our ally showed himself resolved to stand by us to the ultimate consequences, but especially because we were so firm and energetic, we won — and that, too, without drawing the sword. Now it is our duty to solidify this position which we have acquired as a first-class power, if possible to make it still stronger, still more unassailable — we must build dreadnoughts. Perhaps this sounds harsh at a time when all sorts of peace fads are taking possession of people, but of course only among those who understand nothing of politics and its modernest phases, among those who do not know that this phase is imperialism. Unscrupulousness is the key to a strong policy. Self-consciousness and the development of force — that is necessary if one

is not to be crushed, if one is to have a voice in the council of the nations. . . . But I beg the pardon of the ladies, and particularly of our gracious hostess, for having touched on a theme in which fortunately ladies are not interested. There is scarcely anything more repulsive than women who meddle with politics."

Franka felt a sense of suffocation in her throat and a bitter taste in her mouth. The tone and the spirit of the political speech to which she had just listened were, indeed, detestable to her. She might have contradicted what he said; for her father had been living at the time of that crisis to which the imperialistic publicist referred, and he had closely followed the course of events and talked with her about them. She knew that the populace, during the hasty and secret mobilization, was the opposite of enthusiastic; she knew that the war so eagerly desired in high military circles was not allowed to break out for the reason that the Emperor Franz Josef opposed it, that peace was maintained — not from fear of the united bayonets of the central states, but because the other powers desired to avoid a European war and by continual yielding removed all the difficulties that pointed to an ultimatum. Franka might have said all this, but she controlled herself and replied: —

"You need not ask pardon, Doctor; perfect freedom of thought and of expression reigns here."

At this point some of those present took their departure, and after a short time the rest followed, and Franka was left alone with her companion. She

felt depressed — a sense of loneliness and isolation and unprotectedness overtook her, which is especially sad when it comes over one not in actual solitude, but as the aftermath of social intercourse.

CHAPTER VIII

THE OUTLINES OF A GREAT PLAN

THE next day Franka asked Dr. Fixstern what had become of the ring that her grandfather had left to Herr Helmer . . . whether it had been as yet delivered. Dr. Fixstern replied that the jewel was still in his possession.

"Then please give it to me and write Mr. Helmer to come here; I should like to hand him his legacy myself."

A few days later, Franka chanced to be alone, Frau Eleonore having gone out to make some purchases, and was again engaged in turning over the leaves of her father's notebooks, when Chlodwig Helmer was announced.

"Miss Garlett, you sent for me?"

"Yes, Mr. Helmer. I wanted to see you. . . . Will you not come nearer? . . . I have something to put into your hands."

She went to her writing-table where the box with the ring was lying. "You see, my grandfather intended this for you as a remembrance, and I felt it important to deliver it to you myself."

Franka spoke with a rather unsteady voice, for she was conscious that she was not speaking the absolute truth. She did not regard the personal transfer of the ring as so important, and what had been the motive of her summoning the young man

had been the wish — it was almost a longing — for his presence, as if she might find in him a refuge, a support, a defense! He who cherished ideas very similar to those that were expressed in those notebooks — he who had, so to speak, uttered his command to do the "something great" for which her inmost being yearned — he might be able to show her the way. . . .

Helmer took the ring and put it on his finger. "This will always be a doubly cherished remembrance — I had a very high regard for Count Sielen. He was a dear man, a noble mind . . . and that you, yourself, Fräulein Franka . . ." he hesitated.

"Come, let us sit down and talk about my grandfather. You knew him much longer than I did."

The conversation stretched out for half an hour without Franka's being able to muster courage to direct it to the subject which was uppermost in her mind. They talked about the late count, about the life at the Sielenburg, about what had happened since that time, but not a word was said about what both were thinking. Each was regarding and studying the other as they talked, and each might have observed that their thoughts were not on what they were saying.

Franka's eyes rested inquisitively on Chlodwig — had he written the letters or not? His exterior appearance seemed changed; was he unprepossessing? Had she ever really thought him so? And yet certainly no one could call him handsome; his cleanshaven face was too lean, his chin too long, his lips too thin; but if he was decidedly not handsome, his

features were certainly interesting. Franka also noticed something which she had not observed at Sielenburg: Chlodwig had particularly expressive hands — narrow, white, well cared for, not at all effeminately soft — on the contrary, quite powerful; and everything which their possessor said was emphasized by these hands with quick and peculiarly vivacious gestures; these were aristocratic hands, full of character.

Chlodwig also contemplated his companion. Franka seemed to him slightly altered. The somewhat childlike expression which had formerly characterized her features, and which even now came evanescently into them when she smiled, had given way to a more serious and energetic expression — she seemed to him more womanly, more mature.

After half an hour Chlodwig got up: "I fear that I have stayed too long. Accept my thanks again, Fräulein Franka, and permit me to say goodbye."

"No, no, sit down again; I have something else that I want to talk with you about."

Helmer obeyed. A short pause ensued.

Franka was trying to find the right words to begin with. Then with sudden resolution: "Did you write me two letters?"

Chlodwig's cheeks grew red as fire. "Yes," he answered.

"I knew it."

"Forgive the form which . . ."

"Never mind the form; the substance is important to me. You gave me some advice — you

almost laid down the law, and I should like to do what you demand of me; only you must say what . . . how! I must become great, at least, attempt to do something great. What do you consider me capable of doing? What do you consider great? Instead of vague words, I desire to hear from you some definite, tangible, feasible scheme."

Chlodwig's eyes beamed with delight. "Really, you will . . ."

"Yes. An enormous property has fallen into my possession . . . that pledges me . . . what ought I to do, what can I do, apart from so-called charity?"

"What can you do? In order to answer that, I must know you better, Miss Franka; I must measure the flying capacity of your soul. The young girl to whom I wrote was more a vision of my fancy than of my experience. What do I know of your real nature, of your views, of your ideals, your powers?"

"I believe I have the same ideals as you have, Mr. Helmer; otherwise your letters would not have awakened an echo in my soul — and as to my views?" She took up from the table the notebooks in which she had just been reading and handed them to Helmer. "Glance over these notes . . . they are extracts from the thoughts of my father and instructor, who tried to form me after his own model. You will find ideas and expressions like those in your own letters. And, look, these are my favorite books." She directed his attention to a book-rack which hung on the wall behind her writing-table. "They came from my father's library, and they are the fountains from which he nourished my mind. My father's

ideas and yours are in accordance — so, Chlodwig Helmer, in spirit we are brother and sister . . ."

At this moment Frau Eleonore entered the room without knocking. She had several packages in her hands: "Here I am, dear Franka. Forgive me if I was gone too long . . ."

The two others both thought simultaneously, "Not long enough!"

Franka introduced her caller. Frau Eleonore shook hands with him and then began to undo her packages. "Please look, dear Franka, and see if these are the right kind."

Helmer in the mean time was doing as he had been bidden: he glanced through the notebooks and examined the volumes. Then he came back to Franka and said: —

"May I go now? As soon as you send me word, I will be at your service again."

"And will you give me the answer which I desired just now? I mean that concrete plan . . ."

"Will you permit me, in the mean time to lay before you in writing, not the whole plan, but only the sketch of it, in broad lines?"

"As you please . . . that will make the third letter in my collection. Very good, then, I will expect the broad lines. The details afterwards, by word of mouth. *Auf wiedersehen*, Herr Helmer!"

"Who is that young man?" asked Frau Eleonore, after the door had closed behind Chlodwig.

"A signpost at the crossing of the ways."

"What? I did not understand you."

"It is not necessary."

"Not a suitor — I hope?"
"No, God forfend!"

Franka was not kept waiting long for Chlodwig's letter. She opened it with eagerness and read: —

The third letter in the collection. So, then, it must be written in the same tone as the first and the second — from soul to soul. I will not begin with the formal "Gnädiges Fräulein" . . . that expression we will leave for verbal intercourse, but with "Franka" again, and the confidential "Du." We are brother and sister in spirit — you said so, yourself.

Now, then, — the plan in broad outline: you ought to be the proclaimer of a women's gospel — the field-marshal of a feminine crusade of conquest. Mankind from now on is facing mighty tasks which it can accomplish only when its two halves grasp and fulfill these tasks. "All hands on deck" is the cry at sea at critical moments, and when the ship "Mankind" is staggering on mountainous billows, then all hands must be at their posts. My conviction that we are now, at this very moment, at the beginning of a fateful revolution is founded on the unheard-of marvel: a man can fly! His artificial wings have conquered the tempest! His war-cry must henceforth be "Up and away!" in all fields of activity. Active service in the heights devolves upon him, and woman is not exempted from this duty of service. The awakening call must rouse her also, and I look upon you as the one to give the alarm.

Perhaps you imagine that I am asking you to become a militant feminist, to form a new Women's Union and join your forces with the already widespread, and to a certain extent successful, endeavors to gain for women the right to play the same part in the academic and political arena as men do. As a goal the doctor's cap, public offices, "Votes for Women." This movement may go its own

way. I have no notion of putting any limit to it. But what I have in mind is something quite different — the new woman is not to strive for the masculine positions and functions in the State which we men have created for ourselves; not the appropriation of those masculine qualities which are required for the political game as we men play it; least of all, the attainment of the privilege of libertinism, in accordance with which we men live; but she is to help in the construction of a State, of a political machine, of a manner of life, worthy of noble women sharing in it.

To this end, in the first place, it behooves women not to stand aloof; not to remain in ignorance of the machinery of the State, of the complicated intrigues and hidden wires of politics, of the laws which rule economic and social life. Secondly, they must cultivate to their richest flowering the virtues that are regarded as specifically feminine, — kindness, purity, tenderness, — so that when they enter public life, this also may be permeated with those qualities. They will serve an ethical State — they will practice ethical politics. They will then be the most devoted colleagues to those men who even now are setting up an ethical ideal for State and politics, and who are attacking the firmly intrenched error, that State and politics stand on the other side of morals, — a fatal error — for it is responsible for the condition of ignorance, of enmity, and of barbarism from which poor humanity has up to the present been suffering. To be sure, it has already made considerable progress — though slowly — from that aboriginal barbarism; the domain of security and solidarity has gradually been enlarged. But this "gradually" can no longer satisfy us to-day, when the electric spark can be flashed from the Eiffel Tower to the Statue of Liberty. To crawl forward, to climb up — that no longer belongs to our age, now that we have learned to mount on wings. Up yonder we need no winged devils to scatter melinite on our habitations; our greatest haste is to become human: — therefore, "All hands on deck!" Therefore, whoever feels him-

self under a pledge to accomplish something great must trumpet forth the alarm to awaken all the powers of reason and good will that are still slumbering.

And in what way, Franka, do I feel sure you are bound to summon your sisters? By taking part in the Woman Movement? That I have already answered in the negative. By means of a book? Alas! how few read books! No, through the living word, through the magic, the magnetism, of personality, the might of individual enthusiasm. I see you standing on the platform, your "Walküren" fire under control of maidenly dignity, worshipful as a priestess, glorified like a seeress . . .

Let me tell you: I was still a very young boy when I received a deep and overpowering impression from such a priestly speaker, but who was not a priest, — he was a soldier, — Moritz von Egidy, a Prussian colonel of hussars. He had begun by writing a book, called "Earnest Thoughts," and at the same time they were free thoughts. That was not regarded as compatible with discipline and he was obliged to resign from the army. His leading motive was: "Religion not as a part of our life, but our life as religion." What he meant by religion was nothing dogmatic, only ethical. He had attained that idea by earnest thoughts, and he proposed to bring his contemporaries to a similar view by earnest willing! In almost all the German cities he gave public addresses with unexampled success. The largest halls in which he spoke were packed to suffocation and thundered with sympathetic applause.

The effect was tremendous. Soon Egidy congregations began to be formed. But all too quickly he was struck down by death. What he thought, what he preached, — never in an unctuous, clerical tone, but with the military voice of command, — I need not tell you here. I only wished to bring him up as an example — for such is the kind of work which it seems to me you ought to undertake: teacher, leader, prophetess, you must be! Unendingly rich can be the blessing flowing from your activity.

I imagine this influence as simply overpowering. You

would be the first and only person who ever came forward in such a way. Never before was there a young maiden who attempted such a thing, and the magic of youth and beauty will magnify tenfold the might of personal magnetism. Your great property and your position in the world will give you the opportunity of carrying out your scheme without any material difficulty — you can engage the largest hall in every city — entrance free to every one . . . off the stage you will appear the great lady that you are.

Independent, beyond criticism, famous (you would be famous in the very shortest time), — admired and honored, you would be able everywhere to gather around you the heads of society and there use your influence. You yourself would grow by your own work — the higher you try to fly, the greater will be your ability to use your wings, and the traces of your spirit will be visible in the moral progress of this generation and of those to come. I do not say this to stimulate your ambition, but to strengthen your spirit of sacrifice, for I know already that your desire is to accomplish something noble, and to do that, you must be prepared for many troubles and must renounce much. Like the Maid of Orleans, you must crush your own impulses and desires under your coat of mail. For if you should give your heart and hand to any man, it would be all up with your independence. And, moreover, even if your chosen one should admit of your independence, it would be all up with the magic influence. For at least a decade you ought to devote yourself entirely to your task.

You cannot begin immediately, not to-morrow. You must have some time for preparation, for growth, for study. A quiet novitiate before the dedication; and because your position conditions your prestige, you must first make your position solid. You must win the respect of high society; you must win general admiration and consideration. At your very first appearance on the platform, it must be known, to all the city and to the world, that the person who is going to deliver the lecture is the

celebrated and beautiful young heiress of the Count Sielen's estates, honored because of her generous expenditures and reputed to have refused many advantageous offers; — then the hall for the very first time will be taken by storm. And in order that the technical side be not neglected, you must have taken instruction in the art of elocution, in the modulating of your voice.

I have finished. I have really done more than lay down the outlines of the plan — I have also indicated some of the details.

Now you can test yourself; you can demand of your desires, of your conscience, whether a way has been indicated and whether you will follow it.

CHAPTER IX

FRANKA'S DÉBUT AND CAREER

FRANKA read the letter over a second and a third time — then she let it sink into her lap and fell into deep thoughts. She was sitting alone in her sleeping-room; on the table before her stood the breakfast-tray, and beside it her mail, as yet untouched. In the stove a cheerful fire was burning: the windows, through which could be seen the trees of the garden behind the palace, were open and warm sunbeams came laughing in, for it was already springtime. There was occasionally a cool breath of air, full of that spring fragrance which does not come from violets, but suggests violets. Such a breath fans in young hearts the fire of longing — longing for the joys of life.

Franka stood up, still holding the letter in her hand, and went to the window. She looked down into the garden; it was not large, and behind the still leafless trees could be seen the walls and roofs of the houses beyond . . .

"How lovely it must be now in my parks and forests," thought Franka. Nothing would prevent her from journeying to them. A sense of pride in possession and of joyous freedom swelled her heart. The world lay open before her . . . how easily, how freely might she not pluck all the blossoms of enjoyment. But she flung these thoughts away from her.

"To accomplish something great" — that was her task, that was the aim, held up as a command before her conscience, and now she had in her hands what she wanted — a concrete programme, a definite way.

There were men in the world — there was one man — who regarded her with confidence and esteem, who had such a high idea of her that he believed she might be an apostle, a leader . . . oh, if that only might be, if only she had the strength, the courage, and the fire to carry others along with her, to lift them up! And like an electric shock there flashed through her that lightning of the will which bears the name of resolve: "Yes, I will do it!"

She stepped from the window and stood in front of her great pier-glass as if to strengthen her resolution by means of a vow spoken in presence of herself. The mirror reflected a lovely picture. The tall, graceful, maidenly figure, clasped in the folds of a soft, white cashmere morning-gown, the head crowned by a heavy diadem of braids and proudly thrown back, the cheeks brilliantly colored, the dark-red lips slightly parted and showing the gleaming white teeth: so she stood for a little while, and then she repeated the sentence aloud again: "Yes, I will do it!"

Franka went to her desk and wrote a line or two, then she rang for her maid: "Send this dispatch immediately." The telegram was addressed to Chlodwig Helmer and ran: "I expect you to-day for a further talk."

Frau Eleonore entered the room: "Not yet

dressed, dear Franka? And we have such a busy day before us! Look — I have jotted everything down: at eleven o'clock the betrothal-service of the Archduchess — we have cards admitting us to the Augustiner Church; then Drecoll expects you to try on three dresses — that will take at least two hours. There is the reception of the eight lady artists at Pisco's —you promised to go, and we must be sure to see the exhibition of flowers at the Botanical Society — to-day is the last day. It is also Baroness Rinski's *jour;* then . . ."

"Shut up your notebook — I am not going out at all. I am expecting a caller. All that you have told me seems to me so trivial, so trivial . . . Frau Eleonore, I am at the turning-point of my life . . ."

"You are to be married! . . . I ought to have been prepared for it, but it is a hard blow for me."

"No. I am not to be married. Yet, would that affect you so?"

"Of course, because you would not need my services any longer."

"I shall need you more than ever. . . . I want you to accompany me on my journeys."

"What journeys?"

"I will explain it all to you later. Meanwhile I will ask you to give orders that I am at home to no one, absolutely no one, with the exception of Mr. Helmer."

"That is an extraordinary order — what will your servants think. Especially this Mr. Helmer. . . . I wanted to tell you, the other day, when I found you

tête-à-tête with him, that it is not at least very good form for you to . . ."

"Frau Eleonore," interrupted Franka, "I look on you as my companion — a very pleasant companion — who may very possibly become my friend — but not a governess, please!"

Frau Eleonore bit her lips. "Pardon me! Older people always believe themselves justified in giving younger ones advice on the ground of their experience — it is a bad habit."

It was late in the afternoon when Helmer was announced. He had been away, and consequently had not received the telegram in time. Franka was beginning to grow impatient. She sat in her little salon; Frau Eleonore was reading to her from the evening paper, but Franka did not listen. If only Chlodwig would come soon.

When the footman announced her caller, her heart fluttered as if she were expecting a lover. But she was not in love. Helmer seemed to her only as the director of her future career; he was not only going to point out the way, but also to make it smooth for her, support her first steps. And then that kinship in ideas! Among all the strangers, among these indifferent people in whose midst she had lived since her father's death, this was one person allied to her, a fellow-countryman from the home region of her soul — actually a brother; and therefore her heart was drawn toward him.

"Ask him to come in," said she to the footman; and then, turning to her companion, she said: "Remain here, but please do not interrupt with a

word or a question while we are talking; later you will know all about it."

Chlodwig entered. He also was inwardly much agitated. He had not expected that Franka would so speedily accept his proposition. He was, therefore, filled with pride and delight at the thought of it; and beneath it all there was also a vague sense of being in love, yet without passion and without expectation. When he first saw her, his imagination had been somewhat kindled by her beauty, but never had he gone to the extent of thinking that it was within the bounds of possibility for him to win her; still less since she had become a millionairess. And now that she desired to devote herself to the vestal consecration of a great service, she seemed to him absolutely removed from the domain of love and marriage.

He drew nearer: "You sent for me, gnädiges Fräulein."

The presence of the stranger disturbed him. Franka noticed it. She asked him to sit down.

"We can talk without constraint. My friend must be initiated into all my plans — she will accompany me on my *tournées*. And now, how am I to begin?"

Helmer paused to consider. "The first step," he said after a little while, "is the engagement of an elocution teacher. The technical side must be conquered. After that one may get the mastery of the ideal side. Frau von Rockhaus will get the notion," said he, in a different tone of voice, "that you are intending to go on the stage if she hears us talking of *tournées* and elocution masters. And yet how far, how high above that, stands our plan!

What you propose to accomplish is related to the art of acting — however noble that may be — as the Zeppelin stands above a wheelbarrow."

"Your thoughts move much in the upper regions of the air, Mr. Helmer."

"Yes, Miss Franka, the conquest of this element gave me the impulse to my poetry and my aspirations, and this thought must also serve as the foundation of your work."

"What is your poetry? What are your aspirations?"

Helmer explained. His poetry was not to be understood merely in a figurative sense; he was actually writing poetry! He told of the books which he had already written and those which he had in mind to write. Above all, the great epic "Pinions." And as he in eloquent, fiery words explained the meaning and purpose of this poem, and recited some of the lines, out of these words a light fell on Franka as to the meaning of the work which lay before her. The conversation lasted nearly two hours. The plan was discussed alternately in its details and then in its great outlines — lines lost in sublime distances, where to-day Franka's spiritual eyes for the first time penetrated.

It had struck eight o'clock. Helmer was on the point of taking his departure.

"No, no," cried Franka, "now you must have supper with us — informally — just we three alone. Please, Frau Eleonore, you are sitting near the bell, ring for supper to be served. You poor creature must be all used up by silently listening to all these

wonderful things. You need something to strengthen you, and so do we two."

"Uff!" exclaimed Frau von Rockhaus as she touched the bell, and after she had given the order to the servant, "Supper for three," she again uttered her "Uff!" adding, it was high time and ten minutes more had turned her crazy.

Franka laughed: "Did you understand what we were talking about?"

"Well, yes, fairly well. Mr. Helmer wants to build a new flying-machine. You are going to fly up into the air, and from up there deliver addresses — and so you need to have lessons in declamation. You will not touch upon the right of 'Women to vote,' but you will make the whole sex mobile so that they can carry on their activities somewhere in the upper regions. Then, there is to be a circuit through the German cities — or is it through an epic in ten books? — tending to introduce a new civilization; and the requisites for this simple scheme are as far as I could make out — air-propellers, moral search-lights and a Valkyrie's horse."

Chlodwig laughed heartily, so heartily that Franka listened in surprise; she had never heard him laugh so before. It sounded so merry, so boyish, so entirely different from what might have been expected from that serious man who had just been talking with her on the gravest of world-problems — a man whom she had judged, particularly from his behavior on the Sielenburg and from the tone of his letters, and also from the thoughtful expression of his face, to be rather inclined to melancholy.

Now all three were in the most cheerful mood, and during the little supper not a word further was said about the serious plans for the future; the jesting tone that had been hit upon was preserved throughout; several times again, though more quietly, rang out Helmer's characteristic laugh with its golden ring of genuine merriment, and Franka was filled with a sense of perfect ease and enjoyment, which was doubly agreeable after the preceding strain of intellectual excitement; at the same time she realized that her confidence in her brotherly young friend was growing stronger — only a good, pure-minded man laughs like that.

After ten months of industrious study, Franka felt prepared to begin her career. She had also accepted Chlodwig's advice to go through all the books of which he had furnished a list; these brought her into touch with the history and present condition of all the great questions stirring the world, and she made him explain to her his standpoint in these matters.

The result of this period of study was not merely that she proved to be a good pupil who had passed through her course creditably and was capable of understanding and correctly rendering the ideas of other people; but during this period of preparation a thousand original thoughts had arisen in her mind and the material she had stored up put out further blossoms; views, convictions, aspirations were gathered, which grew so imperious that she felt inspired, nay, compelled, to share them with others, to com-

pel others to adopt them. What lay before her — at least, so it seemed to her proud consciousness — was more than a great duty — it was a mission.

"A Word to Young Girls" was the title of her first lecture, and this title was to be seen in gigantic letters on placards posted in every nook and corner of Vienna. Above it was printed: "Great Music-Union Hall, Sunday, January 15. Seven o'clock in the evening. Admission free." And below it: "Speaker: Franka Garlett."

The sensation in Vienna society was immense. . . . What! that pretty Fräulein Garlett, Vienna's richest heiress, she who had refused so many offers of marriage, who had been so generous in her charities, who had gathered about her so many of the distinguished men of the city, who had won universal admiration for her charm of manner, her simplicity and her loveliness — was she coming out as a public speaker? On what subject? Why? People cudgeled their brains, and were somewhat scandalized at such a thing! The idea was certainly quixotic! Was there no one in the noble family of Sielen to put a stop to such an absurdity? And what was she going to say to the young girls? Possibly preach emancipation? Advocate a doctor's career? Equal suffrage? — or perhaps — free love! Certainly these things did not agree at all with her whole personality. But one must be ready to expect anything from a person who suddenly comes out on the platform — no one would ever have thought her capable of that!

The public came in crowds. Helmer had seen to it that the lecture was well advertised in the newspa-

pers, and the fact that it came on a Sunday, and was free, assured a large audience. The first two rows and a few boxes were reserved for invited guests.

Long before the stated hour, the hall was packed to overflowing and the entrances had to be closed. Franka was waiting in the artists' room for the signal to begin. Frau Eleonore, Dr. Fixstern, and Helmer were in attendance on her. Her cheeks were pale, for the terrible phantom which so delights in haunting artists' rooms and the scenes of theaters, — a cousin of it is often found in the waiting-room of dentists,—stage-fright, *le trac*, "footlight-fever," or whatever the thing is called, had seized her throat. The others tried to encourage her — a perfectly useless attempt, which brings forth a still broader grin on the face of the phantom. Now, really, it was no little thing to step out for the first time in one's life and deliver a lecture before so many thousand people!

"O my dear friends, I am frightened at the mere idea of standing on the platform so alone with the abyss before me!"

"Think of 'soaring,'" said Chlodwig; "think of Blériot, who also was alone — high up between heaven and the sea, apparently motionless, lost in the universe."

"And do you believe that I should not be panic-stricken up there? Oh, if I could only be in my room — if I were not obliged to go out before all those strangers, perhaps hostile to me . . ."

"But, Franka, I don't know you," said Frau Eleonore reproachfully. "I thought you were a

heroine. It was certainly not necessary for you to do all this . . ."

Some one came in and announced: "It is time, Fräulein. . . . The house is full. . . . The audience is growing impatient."

A murmur of admiration went through the hall as Franka went forward and took her place at the front of the stage. They were not prepared to see such a maidenly poetic apparition. She wore a very simple white frock with long, open sleeves. Her arms and hands were bare, without gloves, without bracelets, without rings; they were white and perfectly sculpturesque in form. Her luxuriant hair was artlessly arranged around the small head. A bouquet of violets adorned her bodice. She had no manuscript in her hand; nothing but a small ivory fan. Thus she stood there for a moment. Her friends had applauded as she entered, and now the others were clapping their hands so as to inspire the pale girl with confidence. She extended her arms toward the hall as if commanding silence and advanced one more step. The tumult ceased. Then she began in a clear, firm, distinct voice: —

"Dear sisters . . . for, although I see many men in the hall, my message is to women only, particularly to young girls . . ."

The sound of her own voice reassured her. Under the tuition of an eminent professor her melodious alto, capable of rich modulations, had been happily trained and strengthened so that her clearly articulated words were borne to the farthest corners of the hall.

She spoke for nearly two hours; at first very slowly and calmly, but gradually, as she grew more animated, her pale cheeks took on color, her eyes shone, and her voice intensified to a passionate power. It was soon evident that she was in touch with her audience, and repeatedly there was a murmur of approbation; occasionally, outbursts of applause showed the effect of her words. This made her feel as if she were borne aloft, and it happened that many times, as if under inspiration, she used sentences and turns of speech which she had not thought of during the preparation of her lecture, and these very improvisations still further strengthened the magnetic relationship between speaker and audience.

The gist of her address had been expressed in her introduction: "You all know the beautiful expression of Goethe's Antigone: 'Not here for mutual hate, but mutual love are we.' But, my sisters, the modern time enforces upon us a second commandment: 'For mutual thinking are we here.'"

And then she went on to show what are the duties of this latest age, — the age of flying, — and she further showed how in the accomplishment of these duties both halves of the human race must coöperate; how it behooved a woman not only to win for herself the mastery of various professions, of various offices which have hitherto been exclusively preempted by men, but also to realize that she must no longer remain voluntarily aloof whenever the highest interests of the community are in question. Place and voice in the direction of public affairs?

That certainly is already on the programme of the Woman Movement, but the most important thing is a knowledge and understanding of the universal laws that govern nature and the world; then only can she judge and coöperate where social arrangements are to be decided. To take a hand in the transformation of these arrangements, to become themselves law-givers: that is a goal the attainment of which may stand for the future; but even before having attained this positive power, women, and maidens too, may work through their influence. But how shall they bring their views and their feelings to effectiveness if they stay in voluntary ignorance of all those things that regulate the conduct of social, political, and economic life? If in the most important questions on which depend welfare or misery, war or peace, they are to have no voice because they always allow themselves to be told: "You don't understand anything about that!" They must acquire for themselves a conception of the universe. First, they must understand; then they must share in councils; then at last they can coöperate. . . . Indeed, they must understand as well as the men; then they will perhaps do better work than men, because they will not forget that they are there to share in love, that it is their task to make goodness — this highest of feminine virtues — prevail in all situations and all actions.

"There is no reason why the flame on the home altar should die down because we succeed in casting its reflection on political life. Are really mildness and gentleness, capacity for sympathy in sorrow and joy purely feminine characteristics? No, they belong to

men as well. Are power and tenacity of purpose and resoluteness and courage purely masculine virtues? No; they belong to women as well. And the perfect human race of both sexes, when once they are to direct social life side by side, must apply thereto the collective treasure of all their qualities."

Franka did not confine herself to such abstract discussions throughout her lecture. She elucidated in clear, simple words the conditions actually prevailing; she described the promising as well as the threatening prospects of the future as conditioned by the new discoveries, and she pointed out the practical ways which young women of the present day had to enter upon if they were to share in the humanization — nay, rather, the deification of the humanity of the morrow.

The most concrete and practical announcement which she made was that she had established out of her own means a private free course of instruction for mature young women. The lectures were not to be given by her, but by university professors, — and she named certain distinguished persons, — who twice a week during the next four months would give lectures in a large hall engaged by her for this purpose. The following subjects were on the programme: Social science, philosophy, the doctrine of evolution, the history and prospects of contemporaneous movements, and, finally, ethics and æsthetics. These two last were included, because the realm of scientific truth should always be penetrated by the light of morality and beauty. All these courses of study would be given without pedantic

insistence upon details, but would be presented in synthetic method; and all of them, if they were absorbed into the mind of the students, would furthermore produce that broader synthesis which deserves the name of "world-conception," that is, the vision of the world, according to what we actually know it is at present and as it presumably will be in the future, in the line of ceaseless evolution. When she had spoken the peroration in a tone of ardent enthusiasm and with an expression of prophetic inspiration on her youthful features, there was at first a moment of breathless silence and then a burst of thunderous applause. She bowed modestly and left the stage.

In the artists' room she sank exhausted on a sofa. Her three friends surrounded her: — "It was marvelously beautiful!" — "Bravo, Franka!" — Helmer kissed her hand: "Heroine," he said in a whisper.

In the hall the applause would not cease.

"They are calling for you," said Dr. Fixstern. "The audience wants to see you again."

Franka shook her head. "No, I will not go out again — I am not a prima donna!"

"But just hear, how they are clapping, how they are calling for you."

"I beg of you, dear Doctor, go out and tell them that I have already left the hall."

Dr. Fixstern did as she ordered.

"Are you very tired, Franka?" asked Frau Eleonore. "How do you feel?"

"How do I feel? Happy!"

This was the beginning of Franka's career, and now followed a series of triumphs. The newspapers published long extracts from her addresses and enthusiastic criticisms of her skill in the art of elocution. A few days after her début she gave her second lecture, which again packed the great Music Hall to the last seat; then she spoke in the Workingmen's Home, and here she kindled even more enthusiasm than before. Among the young women of Vienna there sprang up a regular Franka cult, her adherents called themselves "Frankistinnen"; as their badge they wore a violet pin. There was in all the bookshops a special display of her portraits. In the toyshops Franka dolls were put on sale and were eagerly bought. The comic papers published caricatures of her. Karl Kraus made a feature of her in a Garlett number of "Die Fackel." Herds of autograph hyenas came down upon her. An impresario offered her an engagement for America. The gramophone companies made her an offer to have her represented on a record. A fashionable tailor introduced the long, open Garlett sleeves. The pupils who attended the courses of instruction which Franka had established were designated by the nickname of the "Garlett girls." And, worse than all, vaudeville theaters enriched their repertoires of topical songs with a Garlett stanza.

Franka shuddered under this tidal wave of popularity; it was almost mortifying to her. She had undertaken her work as a kind of vestal mission, and now it was accompanied by such noisy publicity. But like all sudden and exaggerated excitement, this

also gradually subsided; yet the quiet and earnest effect continued and increased. She soon recovered, in the estimation of all, her standing as a powerful advocate and woman of irreproachable character. The Sielen relatives, to be sure, turned their backs on her. Adele and Albertine and their whole set completely vanished. It was not a severe blow to her.

After a few weeks she went on a lecture *tournée* to all the principal cities of Germany. She was accompanied only by Frau von Rockhaus and a maid. A business manager preceded her, whose duty it was to engage for her lecture-halls and suitable quarters in the hotels. Everywhere she went, she was received not only in her public capacity as a speaker, but also with special honors by society as a lady. In the course of time her journeys extended beyond Germany, first to the Scandinavian countries, then to London and Paris. And after a few years her fame was world-wide.

CHAPTER X

AT LUCERNE

THE clock of Eternity has moved forward a few seconds; we are writing 191–. The twentieth century is still "in its teens," but 1920 is not far away. The impatient, the impetuous, those who a few years ago were shouting, full of anxiety or full of hope, "Now, now, everything is going to change — a new era has dawned — mighty revolutions are before us," — all these have to confess that the face of the world, on the whole, has not been very much altered, and that the actual transformations, by reason of their gradual development, have been almost unnoticeable. Terrible catastrophes like the sudden destruction of cities by earthquakes, thrones overturned by revolutions, rulers assassinated by the throwing of bombs, colonial and other wars — such things may have devastated for a brief period the little strips of land affected and aroused a general sensation, but soon everything became calm again. This applies not only to the great disasters, but also to great and unexpected good fortune such as the announcement of marvelous discoveries or world-redeeming ideas: — such things startle men for a moment out of their apathy, and awaken the wildest hopes; but then they quickly flatten out and become commonplace, disappear from the surface, and must pass through the stages of gradual development, until they succeed in

changing the face of the world. So many a fountain springs foaming from the rocks, but only when it has, after a long course, united with a thousand other trickling rivulets, does it become a river.

The hotels at Lucerne were filled to overflowing. It was once more time for the "Toker Rose-Week" to begin. From year to year the "Rose Pilgrims," as they called themselves, had been streaming thither in greater and greater numbers. It had become the fashion to spend seven days in Lucerne. Many came not for the purpose of absorbing the lofty intellectual enjoyments there offered, but in order to be seen. As the hotels and private boarding-houses of the city were no longer sufficient to harbor all the strangers, some automobile-owners had conceived the idea of spending the nights in their machines, — for very abundant were the cars that were provided with conveniences for sleeping and toilet, — and a vast automobile-park covered the fields around the city.

During the first years Mr. Toker had been satisfied to lodge his guests in a hotel engaged for the purpose, and all the exercises took place in its public rooms. But now, the edifices and gardens which he had planned were ready, and in their fairyland beauty they had won the reputation of being one of the sights of Europe. The list of invitations which Mr. Toker sent out in 191– was very differently constituted from that which he had written down in his first prospectus. For many of those who then bore brilliant names in the firmament of fame had been

extinguished, and new stars had flamed into sight. The aged die — room for the young!

It was the first day of the first week. Mr. Toker was as yet alone, and was awaiting the arrival of his illustrious guests. His friendly old face was radiant. He was satisfied with his work. Success had attended it. The way the concentrated forces had acted was astonishing and their effect was constantly increasing. As if unified in a central sun, the flames of genius scattered over the earth were now blazing in his Rose-Temple, and spread from there, as by a mighty reflector, all over the earth, penetrating all corners where their light had never before shone.

From many indications, Toker was aware that the level of Public Spirit had been elevated by the influence that emanated from the Rose-Temple. Watchwords, winged phrases which had flown forth from there, were circulated in newspapers and were quoted in parliaments; the year-books, containing extracts from the discourses delivered, were to be found in the libraries of universities, and were widely used as manuals for the instruction of the young; the wide international public listened to the addresses of these great ones of the earth and accepted many of their lofty thoughts and involuntarily introduced them into social conversations; so that when Mr. Toker jestingly said, "This is my world-ennobling factory," he did not claim too much.

Certainly, not all the dreams that John A. Toker had conceived when he made his plan had been fulfilled. What had given him the impulse to take up

the work had been his indignation that the splendid invention of a dirigible airship had been greeted as a useful weapon for future wars. No! against such a notion, against such possibilities, — a rain of annihilation from the sky, — must a mighty storm of protest be raised; he had called these great minds together for this purpose.

On the very first week of the Rose-Festival, this theme was printed on the programmes and flaming anathemas against the barbarization of the air went forth into the world, combined with the demand to put an end to war itself. But no palpable result followed — the war ministries continued to install their fleets of airships, and the construction of fortifications and dreadnoughts went on without interruption, in spite of the fact that these instruments of war would be superfluous and useless if once they were exposed to the rain of explosives.

But John A. Toker had faith. Not in one year, and not in two or three, could such a mighty work be accomplished — certainly, dirigible flights to spiritual and moral altitudes were not easier of attainment than those in the physical atmosphere.

"Well, papa, has not a single specimen of your great menagerie arrived yet?" Toker's only daughter, Gwendoline, a girl of eighteen, overflowing with life, came and laid her hand on her father's shoulder and laughingly put this question. And when she laughed a whole *scherzo* of dazzling teeth, sparkling eyes, and mischievous dimples was playing over her piquant little face. "Are you expecting wholly exotic birds this year?" she added.

"Oh, Gwen, how can you be so lacking in reverence?"

Her features suddenly assumed the expression which she herself called her "Sunday singing-book face."

"Oh, papa, I am penetrated with awesome reverence! Only to think of all these laurel-crowned moonshine occiputs, trumpeted together from every corner of the globe, makes me shiver with respect! And is it not true that this year a 'Jap' is coming?"

"A Japanese, yes, daughter. You know I do not permit abbreviations for whole nations. Or do you like it when your father is spoken of as the 'Yankee'?"

"Dear me, and what do you say when your daughter is called a 'Gibson Girl,' or the 'Dollar Princess'? . . . Oh, look! there is one flying now and there is another. And there, away down on the horizon, — is not that an airship?"

The balcony on which father and daughter were standing commanded a wide outlook over land and lake. The edifices which Mr. Toker had caused to be erected were situated only a short distance from the shore. The narrow strip of land between the water and the buildings seemed to be covered with a pale-red giant carpet — the whole piece was one single bed of roses. The lake glittered in the sunshine and innumerable sailboats and other craft were moving on its surface. On the distant horizon snow-crowned mountain peaks, and above all a cloudless sky, against the brilliant blue of which were hovering several dark dragon-flies — the air-motors now no

longer objects of wonder: no longer objects of wonder, but nevertheless overpoweringly wonderful. Always, when at a greater or less distance such an equipage was seen, men exclaimed just as Gwendoline did: "See, an aeroplane, and there's another, and yonder is an airship!"

Mr. Toker raised his head and shaded his eyes: — "Yes, my daughter, I see and rejoice! How high they fly! Oh, but man will no longer soar to the heights with impunity . . ."

"'With impunity'? . . . I don't understand . . ."

"No, you do not understand. You do not know, as yet, why we are here. I have not informed you what the object is which I am aiming at in my Rose-Week. Perhaps I will tell you some other time — you have seemed to me still too young, too childish. You are such a child still, Gwen, — lucky girl!"

"When may I learn to fly, papa? When may I have my little airship?"

"Do you see — even that you would regard as a toy!"

Three days later Toker's guests were all assembled in the Rose-Palace at Lucerne. Not quite all, indeed, whom he had invited had responded to his invitation; still, only a few stars from the firmament of living celebrities had failed him. If it was a great privilege for the public to see gathered together in one spot such a multitude of famous men and women, and to hear them, it was for these guests themselves a still greater pleasure to meet their brethren and sisters of genius under one roof.

Especially did the week that preceded the formal exercises offer the most delightful opportunity for quiet, intimate intercourse among those who had been in the habit of coming for several years. Many close friendships had already been formed. No one who had once been a guest at the Rose-Palace, however abounding in thoughts and experiences in his own right, departed from the place without having been enriched in many respects, without having gained a general deepening of knowledge and a broadening of the mental horizon. All kept throughout the year a delightful memory of the Rose-Days; an invitation to be present was a lofty object of ambition to those who had not as yet been guests there.

John A. Toker felt his heart swell with the most joyful pride as he joined the circle of his guests. Was it not the most noble assembly of kingly personages that the world possessed? At brilliant court festivities there might, indeed, be as many Excellencies, Highnesses, and Majesties gathered together, but the majority of these title-bearers would have sunk into oblivion in the next generation, while the names and works of the majority of Toker's Rose-Court would be handed down to coming centuries.

In the hall of one of the first-class hotels at Lucerne at tea-time, chattering groups are scattered about in various corners and window-embrasures, separated from one another by potted plants and by pillars and screens which divide the immense room with its niches and bay-windows into practically small private parlors. The sofas and wide armchairs

of light-green straw are decked with cushions covered with pale flowered silk and stuffed with eiderdown.

The larger and smaller groups and the solitary persons sitting here and there, drinking tea, had evidently come from all parts of the world. Although a certain international uniformity causes people to be differentiated rather by the classes to which they belong than by their nationalities, still there are certain indications by which one can tell with some certainty by the external appearance whether the persons met with are English or French, Germans or Americans, Slavs or Italians. In this great hall you could also see some specimens of quite exotic nationalities, for several Japanese and an East Indian Rajah were present.

Two men, sitting at a small table on which the waiter had just set a service of various liqueurs, were amusing themselves in guessing what country this or that person, seated near them or passing by, came from.

"See, that family with the three tall daughters, the haughty mother, and the papa reading the newspaper, is certainly English."

"That was not difficult to detect since that gigantic newspaper is the 'Times.'"

"That pretty little lady there, decked with tassels and ribbons, and at the same time flirting with the three men talking with her so vivaciously, must be a Parisian."

"And that rather stout beauty over there, with the suspicion of a mustache and a superfluity of jewels, is probably from some Balkan State."

"And that comfortable-looking, honest couple, so old-fashioned in their dress, with their silver wedding celebrated long ago, and who make it very evident that they are unhappy because they do not have two jugs of beer in front of them, instead of that insipid tea, evidently come from some little German city."

"And that group by the window, — very elegant, but nothing conspicuous about them, — it would be rather difficult to tell what country they come from. National characteristics betray themselves generally by something like caricatures — normal men of the cultivated classes, with their air of assurance, with their correct dress, might come from anywhere; you can tell what society they belong to,—that is, good society,—but not from what country."

A young man dressed entirely in white, remarkably slender and tall, was just crossing the room on his way to the street door. Half a step behind him marched respectfully an elderly gentleman of military bearing, but in dark civilian dress.

"Who can that young man be? Nice-looking fellow! I should take him for an American."

"That would be a mistake. It happens that I can tell you about him. That is Prince Victor Adolph, the fourth son of a German monarch. I also know that he is not the ordinary kind; he is democratic, not to say socialistic, in his tendencies; an enemy to court etiquette and against everything military. For that reason, apparently, he is compelled to have the old general with him as a traveling companion.

That he is American in his appearance is perhaps due to the fact that he spent a term studying at Harvard University."

The two gentlemen engaged in this conversation were from Vienna. They had become acquaintances in the railway coupé while coming to Lucerne. This method of travel was still in use, although an organized passenger service by airship had already been established; just as at the end of the thirties in the nineteenth century, after the opening of the first railway the post-stage still ran merrily for a time. And just as at that time many people vowed that they would never, as long as they lived, enter a railway train, so now the majority of people swore that no money in the world would tempt them to trust their precious lives to the mysterious ocean of air. Besides, a new, safety-assuring power had come into railway service, since everywhere was installed the rapid and inexpensive and comfortable one-rail system.

One of the two Viennese was Baron Franz Bruning, Chlodwig Helmer's boyhood friend. He had not greatly changed; his full, round face had possibly grown a trifle rounder, his black mustache a little bushier. In his civil career he had been fortunate enough to have risen to the rank of Hofrat.

The other, a personality pretty widely known throughout the city, was named Oscar Regenburg. When his name appeared in the papers, "Among those present was noticed," it read: "Herr Oscar Regenburg, the well-known sportsman." If any man who has money and goes a good deal into society,

yet has no rank among the nobility, exercises no calling, is not active in any business, is not honored with any public appointment, but as a compensation possesses several saddle-horses and an automobile, then — since every man must have some kind of title — he is called a "sportsman."

Sport, however, was not the goal of Oscar Regenburg's ambition. He would have much preferred to bear the title of "art connoisseur"; for he was an assiduous collector of paintings, old armor, and rare china. His spare time he spent in visiting art collections, picture auctions and galleries. He also evinced great interest in music and the theater — although he cultivated the stage not so much from before the curtain as behind the scenes, especially in the form of pretty operetta singers. Furthermore, he was an amateur traveler, — certainly not for the purpose of enjoying beautiful scenery, but so as to be present wherever expositions or horse-races or aviation meetings or festivals of any kind were taking place. Therefore, he could not fail to be, for once at least, a visitor at the Lucerne Rose-Week.

Genuine deep passions were not at the bottom of all these occupations; Regenburg was a thoroughly apathetic man, mediocre in every direction; his whole object in life was to fill up his superfluous time and spend his superfluous money. He was a man of thirty-five, of insignificant external appearance, but he always took pains to look elegant and *chic* by following the latest fashion in dress, in behavior, and in the use of slang. As, for example, the fashion had obtained among men, to sit as negligently as possible

with the right foot on the left knee, moving the point of the shoe up and down and at the same time caressing the bright-colored silk stocking visible almost to the top; there was no one who let his toes play with more vivacity or expression, or who clasped his own thin ankles more tenderly than he did.

The two men continued their conversation.

"I have no faith in these democratic poses among the sons of rulers," said Bruning, as he poured himself out a tiny glass of bénédictine.

"As far as I have observed, you take the attitude of 'I have no faith in it' toward most things."

"As a matter of fact, I regard it as a reasonable and useful quality to be a skeptic. When a man has collected some little experiences in life, and possesses some little knowledge of men, and has attained some insight behind the scenes of the various social, political, and . . . other comedies which are being played on the world's stage, one gets along best by putting on the armor of doubt. Can it be that you are an idealist nourished on illusions?"

"I? . . . Oh, I am just nothing at all — I live and let live."

"That's also a reasonable point of view. Well, but I am curious to know what is to be offered in the Rose-Booth yonder. It is interesting to see all the living celebrities trotted out by the great dollar-ring-master; — the play will certainly remind me of Hagenbeck, who makes long-maned lions and spitting tiger-cats go through their paces in unnatural attitudes. What is still more comic in the whole show is that there seems to be a civilizing and world-

improving aim bound up with it — as if this world could be improved! Man remains man, and when I say that, I do not say anything very flattering. And, above all, how can the world be made better by a few self-conceited people making speeches before a few other frivolous people? The only effect that addresses have on me is to make me sleepy. I never attend them on principle."

"What did you come here for, then?"

"Because an old friend of mine — the poet Chlodwig Helmer — belongs to the lion-tamer Toker's gang of boarders. I get from this friend what the whole object and aim of the circus of fame-crowned animals amounts to . . ."

"Well, what is it?"

"Men are to learn to fly morally. Do you understand that?"

"Not altogether."

CHAPTER XI

AN EVENING IN THE ROSE-PALACE

CHLODWIG HELMER had attained high literary rank during these years. His drama, produced in the Volkstheater at Vienna, won great applause, and was soon added to the repertory of every playhouse in the country. A second drama — in verse — was granted the Schiller Prize. But his epic poem "Schwingen" — " Pinions" — obtained the most signal success. The whole campaign of the conquest of the regions of the air, from Icarus to Zeppelin and Blériot, was celebrated. But, further, in prophetic tone, dipping into the future, — and this part of the poem was by far the greatest, — the changes were described which would in all probability take place in consequence of that mightiest among the achievements of human genius. Particularly did the poet sing those flights which, like a corollary to physical soaring, should bear aloft into more luminous regions the human intellect and the ethical aspiration of man.

The epic aroused immense enthusiasm. Translations into French and English were made and the name of Helmer became famous throughout the world, and of course reached the attention of John A. Toker, who forwarded his invitation to the young poet. He did it with all the more enthusiasm, because he had discovered in "Schwingen" the very

same ideas as had given him the impulse to the inauguration of the Rose-Week. It was a noteworthy coincidence of thought. And yet, when you came to think of it, not so remarkable after all. . . . Thoughts which were afloat in an age are produced by the phenomena of that age, and they are precipitated simultaneously in different places into different minds, so that it frequently happens that great discoveries and inventions are made at the same time by several discoverers and inventors, quite independently of one another.

Still another young celebrity was invited by Toker for this year's Rose-Week at Lucerne: this was Franka Garlett.

On the evening before the public exercises were to take place, the guests of the Toker Rose-Palace were gathered around the great table. When the dessert was served, the master of the house tapped on his glass. All became silent and listened: —

"My dear and illustrious guests! The beneficent custom here prevails that no formal toasts are ever presented. All the eloquence that we are capable of expending must be reserved for the public campaign which begins to-morrow. But for the very reason that this is the last evening which we are to have to ourselves, I will take advantage of it, in order to tell you something which I have on my mind."

He paused for a moment. All eyes were fixed upon him with eager anticipation. His external appearance made a sympathetic and confidence-inspiring picture: absolutely correct in his evening-dress, but at the same time quite informal, almost negligent in

his attitude. His short-cropped hair was already perfectly white, but his cheeks were of a bright rosy color, and a joyous expression of the greatest good-nature showed itself in his face. In a somewhat altered voice he went on: —

"When a few years ago I saw assembled here for the first time this wreath of chosen men and women, — alas! some of the blossoms have been blighted by the frost of death, but others have come to take their places, for such is the way of the world, — when for the first time I had conjured before me so many spirits of light, I believed that from their collected brilliancy a sudden enlightenment might gush out over the whole earth. That was an illusion! The thick darkness of ignorance, misery, stupidity, and wickedness, in which our world is still densely enveloped, is not to be so rapid dispelled. It will take much further endeavor to drive it away. But that the efforts which have gone forth from this place have not been wholly vain, I, and assuredly you, have the fullest conviction. What especially pleases me, as the result of this fortnight in the month of roses, is the advancement, the enjoyment, the edification which you yourselves have all found here by being able to hold familiar intercourse with people of your own stamp from the domain of genius, by mutually giving intellectual stimulus and enrichment to one another, by the consciousness that you, all of you, whether you be masters in this art or that, whether you be discoverers in this science or that, whether you be prophets in this sphere of thought or that — that all of you, I say, still form only one

communion: — that of the elevators of human life. And a loftier life is to stream forth from here and hasten that development through which all mankind is to be brought up to a higher level. Oh, I know right well what the doubters will reply: 'What is carried away from your Rose-Parliament, in the columns of innumerable newspapers, pamphlets, and gramophone records, is merely words, words . . . ideas . . . and what moves society are deeds and needs. Not by reason, but by the passions, that is to say, by violent feelings, are the masses moved; all your beautiful speeches glitter and burst like soap-bubbles.' Of course, ideas are not the only impelling forces; more powerful are the instincts. It is always a mistake to explain the complicated movements of the world and of society by the working of one element, of one force; for numberless elements, numberless forces, are always in activity. And to deny the force of thought is equivalent to ignoring the half of the universe, which consists of matter and of spirit."

"Is not papa a dear little old philosopher?" whispered Gwendoline, who sat at the other end of the table, to her neighbor, a famous English novelist.

"Feelings regulate actions," continued Mr. Toker; — "granted; but frequently feelings are ruled by thoughts. Ideas, among them illusory ideas, are what kindle the enthusiasm of the masses, and are fought for. Forth from ideas proceeds that sublime endeavor which is called the ideal. What was striven for yesterday is the attained to-day, and gives way

to new endeavor, to new-born ideas, and that is equivalent to saying to new ideals."

"Now he has said enough, don't you think so?" murmured Gwendoline again. "One should not bore one's guests."

The novelist glanced at her reprovingly: "It does not bore *me*."

"Thoughts are the begetters of sensations; above all, they are the foundations of knowledge. Therefore, whoever scatters thoughts into the world, scatters seed from which grow all those fruits that we enjoy under the name of culture. There is much bitter fruit in with it, because still many unworthy thoughts are floating about. Progressive humanity requires high thinking! Soaring thoughts. . . .

"This year, just as every year, a volume is to be published which will contain your addresses: I propose to entitle this volume, 'Menschliche Hochgedanken' — 'Thoughts that soar.' The beginning of our Rose-Weeks coincided with the conquest of the air. You know that the impulse of your joint action was given to me by the flights which were accomplished by the first 'dirigible' through the sea of ether. Now it is for us to bring about some victorious records by our flights into the azure realm of the ideal. Thoughts are the vehicle for this — thoughts which soar above the clouds — that is to say, high above the vapors of petty private interests, above the flats of national contentions — in a word, thoughts that soar! And so I close with one word, the war-cry which must be the war-cry of the new, height-conquering age: the cry, 'Upward!'"

"Upward!" responded the whole Table Round.

Thereupon all adjourned into the adjoining hall.

An illustrious company, indeed. There were few young people among them, and not many women. The wreaths of unquestioned glory are usually twined around masculine heads, and there mostly when they are bare.

The youngest of the thirty Rose-Knights was Chlodwig Helmer; the youngest among the six ladies of the Roses — all of them wearing an enameled rose on the left breast — was Franka Garlett.

As they sat or stood, they divided naturally into various groups. Some passed through the open doors to the terraces, and among these was Franka on Helmer's arm.

It was a bright moonlit night in June; the air was full of intoxicating fragrance rising from the dense parterres of roses. On the neighboring lake glided illuminated boats, and even up in the air could occasionally be seen a light moving swiftly by — probably some sentimental aëronaut on an evening flight. Quite unobtrusively yet distinctly was heard the music of an orchestra playing in a neighboring concert-hall.

Franka sat down in a rocking-chair at the end of the terrace and Helmer stood by her side leaning against the balustrade. They gazed and listened for some little time without speaking. Franka wrapped a trifle closer around her the white silken scarf which she had thrown over her shoulders.

"A cool breeze blows from the lake," she remarked.

"Shall we go back to the hall?"

"Oh, no, it is fine here. Everything is so beautiful, so dreamy, so magical. . . . Is it not remarkable that we two should meet here as colleagues in the Knighthood of the Roses? How many years is it since we first met in grandfather's chamber at the Sielenburg? You a poor secretary, I a poor orphan girl! — You are now a great and celebrated poet!"

"And you — the Garlett! The name has such a distinction that nothing more needs to be added to it."

"What I have come to be, Brother Chlodwig, I owe to you. Had it not been for those letters . . ."

"Well, yes; perhaps everything would have been different — perhaps more happily for you. . . . I find in your face a trace of seriousness, sometimes of sadness, which was not there when I saw you last."

It had been two years since that last time. Circumstances had frequently separated these two friends. Helmer had settled in Berlin, where, after the successful performances of his drama, he had accepted a position as a subdirector of the Royal Theater. Franka had frequently been absent on her journeys, had spent one whole winter in southern Italy for a complete rest; — in short, there had always been intervals of several months, and finally now two years had elapsed without Franka and Helmer's having met.

But their correspondence had gone on without any cessation. They had remained constantly in communication by letter. They exchanged full con-

fidences in regard to all their labors and plans; they shared their views over all external happenings; but they never actually wrote any personal confidences. His poems and her lectures formed the chief topics of their correspondence; as colleagues they had become strongly bound together; as man and woman they had remained rather like strangers, although their letters had always preserved that soul-relationship of brother and sister with which their correspondence had begun. It was for both a great and genuine pleasure to be invited together as Mr. John A. Toker's guests; it gave to the festivities of this week a flavor of intimacy. During these days they had seen a good deal of each other, — every time he had been her seat-mate at table, — and they had told each other all that was worth telling of their lives during the past two years.

"So I look sad, do I?" replied Franka to Helmer's observation. "And yet I have no sorrow; I am not unhappy."

"That is only a negative assurance — you do not say that you feel happy. But I can imagine what you lack . . ."

"And I can guess what you imagine. . . . Well, it is true that in the life that I am leading there is more or less renunciation; but is n't that necessary whenever one dedicates one's self to any impersonal service? How is it when a maiden devoted to piety takes the veil?"

"Fortunately you have registered no vow, Franka. You can always . . ."

"Marry, do you mean? Let us talk of something

else. You are the last person to say such things to me."

"It is true, I myself directed you to the path of renunciation. As long as your task completely occupied you — but does it still?"

"Do not ask me such confessional questions. The task is great enough to fill any life; but I often feel myself too small for the task. Are you quite satisfied, are you quite happy, Helmer?"

"No; but that is not at all necessary. I believe that no man has any rightful claim to be. Least of all, we fighters. We need bitterness, hindrances — our goal must forever seem farther away from us."

At this instant the daughter of their host joined them: —

"I hope that I am not disturbing a flirtation. . . . Do let me sit down with you, Miss Garlett. Oh, and please, Mr. Helmer, do not go away . . . you are among my favorites, because you are young still — comparatively speaking. The famous specimens of wisdom which papa collects around him are all too venerable for me; it is a genuine enjoyment to see two such fresh geniuses as you are. . . . You ought to marry — pardon me, I am chattering absurdities. Certainly, papa understands everything imaginable: making money in heaps, carrying out gigantic undertakings, universal politics, and dozens of other things — but not the education of daughters. Oh, look," she cried, interrupting herself, "is n't that lovely?"

She pointed to the dark horizon, where at that moment not merely one but four airships, each pro-

vided with dazzling lights, were maneuvering. They darted up and swooped down, made "figure eights" and loops, passed and repassed one another in premeditated regularity — a regular air-quadrille.

"Is n't that still lovelier?" said Helmer, pointing to a shady clump of bushes where irregular points of light were flickering. "There, do you see? — fireflies! Nature is everywhere more beautiful than any of the works of men. And do you know also why these little creatures, otherwise so invisible, have put on such glittering coat-tails? They are in love and they are out a-wooing. . . . Nature always makes use of beauty when she is serving love."

"I cannot answer for that, Mr. Helmer. It is my principle — for I am a reservoir filled to the brim with the strictest principles — to turn the conversation as soon as a man speaks the word love."

"Yes, Miss Toker, you really give that impression," laughed Franka.

Again a fascinating spectacle was presented to them — a great white quadrilateral sheet, such as are seen on the stage of a moving-picture theater, appeared on the horizon stretching up high into the sky and on it were projected magnificently colored living pictures. Immense pictures, for the force of the imagination multiplied their dimensions in proportion to the distance apparently equal to that of the stars; and yet it was only the trickery of diminutive films. It was a wholly new invention, based on the laws of the Fata Morgana. Many of the people present saw this spectacle for the first time and it filled them with wonder and awe.

"What shall we not discover before we get through, we worms of the earth!" cried Franka; "and how deep into the heavens even now all our mechanical apparatus penetrate!"

"Apparatus, yes," murmured Chlodwig; "but not our minds!"

"Don't be ungrateful, Helmer," said Franka, reproachfully. "Does not the great success of your 'Schwingen' prove sufficiently that a wide circle of minds already feel a yearning for the heights? If it were not so, would you be so understood, so celebrated? Is n't it true, Miss Toker, that the English translation of Helmer's poem has aroused the greatest admiration in England and America?"

"Yes, I believe so; at least, papa says so. He is quite crazy over your 'Schwingen.' However, I have n't read it. Papa thinks that you meant to express in poetry exactly the same as he tries to express with his Rose-Week . . . but what that really means is a mystery to me. . . . I believe he would like just such a man for his son-in-law . . . but you must not regard this as an offer of marriage, Mr. Helmer. . . . I shall accept only an American . . . and if it should chance to be a European, then it must be at least a duke in the superlative degree — a grandduke or an archduke. . . . Those titles please me, and especially the way those grandees are addressed in German which, translated into English, would mean 'Your Transparency, Your Serene Transparency' . . . would not a man appear like a bunch of Roentgen rays? . . . But now I must trot back to the salon. Good-bye!"

Franka, smiling, looked at her as she went, and exclaimed: "What a dear little goosie!"

In the white frame against the evening sky now appeared a magnificent picture: — the Gods of Olympus. It looked as if the heaven had opened and allowed mortals down below to see how the Immortals exist. To be sure, they were only the immemorially known forms of human fancy, such as had been seen to satiety in paintings and on the stage; but the vast space and the gigantic size of the apparition, passing beyond all power of comprehension, evoked admiration mingled with awe. Now, the Olympian ones began to move: Hebe poured nectar into a cup which she presented to Jupiter; Cupid shot an arrow which fell out of the frame — it might have pierced one of the spectators down below; Venus, clothed in glittering silvery veils, laid her arm around the War-God's shoulder, and Juno caressed her peacock as it stood with circling tail widespread. In a half-minute all had disappeared. Then followed a picture from the Catholic Heaven — the Sistine Madonna, lovely and motionless. Fantastic landscapes followed, the like of which do not exist on earth, inhabited by creatures such as have never been seen. It was as if the impenetrable curtain, which is hung at a billion-mile distance over the secret activities of the world of stars, had been suddenly withdrawn, giving men a glimpse into the regions of Mars or of Saturn. To be sure, they were only pictures due to the power of human imagination, which can never attain the unknown realities, yet, appearing in the firmament, they were like revelations from other worlds.

Franka put her hand on Helmer's arm: "Ah, Brother Chlodwig!" she sighed, shuddering.

He bent down to her: "What is it, Franka?" He asked this as gently as one might inquire what troubled a trembling child, and with his expressive hand he made a motion as if he were going to caress her forehead — but he refrained.

"I know that it is only illusion — but these glances into unearthly, infinite distances fill me with a weird, painful sense of loneliness, of nothingness . . ."

"I know that . . .?"

"You do, Chlodwig? I thought, the higher your soul soars, the more at home you felt."

"The more reverent, perhaps, — but 'at home'? Infinite space is so cold we cannot build huts on the Milky Way" — he laid his hand on Franka's which still rested on his arm. "Do you know the Schubert song in which a will-o'-the-wisp holds up before the lonely wanderer the realization of his deepest yearning: — a warm house and in it a well-beloved heart? . . ."

"A well-beloved heart," repeated Franka dreamily.

They remained for a while silent, looking into each other's eyes. Then Franka withdrew her hand and stood up: "We will return to the salon."

CHAPTER XII

MR. TOKER'S ILLUSTRIOUS GUESTS

By this time there had assembled a still larger crowd than before, visitors having come to join the house-party. Whoever had letters of introduction to either Mr. Toker or to one of his guests, was invited once and for all to spend the evening in the Rose-Palace.

When Franka entered the room, Mr. Toker came toward her: "Ah, here you are. . . . I was just looking for you. A gentleman is here who is eager to be introduced to you. I will bring him immediately."

He went away, and after a few moments came back with a strikingly distinguished-looking young man: —

"Miss Garlett, here is Prince Victor Adolph, of ——, who tells me that he has heard you speak in his father's city and now is highly pleased to be able to bring his homage to you."

After saying this, Mr. Toker withdrew and joined his other guests.

Franka greeted her new acquaintance with a bow. "I am very glad to meet you. . . . Your Highness was at my lecture?"

"Yes, gnädiges Fräulein, and I am very much pleased to be able to hear you again. The problem that you are treating interests me deeply."

He spoke very deliberately in a low tone, almost timidly.

"Is that so, Prince? Are you really interested in the tasks that confront young women? For that is the theme which I took for my lecture in your home city."

"Heavens, I am interested in everything that is in any degree revolutionary."

"A remarkable taste for an heir to a throne."

"I shall never mount the throne — thank God!"

"That is a pity, for revolutionary monarchs are exactly what our epoch might make use of."

"Do you think our epoch needs monarchs?"

This tone surprised Franka and appealed to her. In order to be able to continue the conversation, she sat down on a sofa which was just behind her. At her invitation Victor Adolph took his place on the sofa at a respectful distance from her. She let her eyes rest with pleasure on his figure. He was slender, sinewy, and very tall; his head with its blond curly hair was held high, as if he were a very haughty man; but this impression was contradicted by an exceedingly gentle expression about the mouth; the red lips were not concealed by his slight mustache; his eyes were intensely blue and full of vivacity; his eyebrows rather delicate and straight, also thick and almost black. His age was about twenty-six. Taken all in all, he was a fine specimen of the genus "Man."

With no less pleasure Victor Adolph's eyes rested on the womanly form next him, Indeed, Franka now looked womanly and not girlish as at her first arrival at the Sielenburg. Both the years and her

work had matured her. The earnest and passionate mental work which she had to accomplish in her chosen mission had imprinted on her face an expression of almost gloomy resolution, but this wholly disappeared when she opened her mouth to speak, or still more when she smiled; then dimples showed in her cheeks and made her look much younger than she was. Her figure also, though still slim and supple, had lost its former ethereal delicacy. It was the figure of a majestic Diana, not of an emaciated nymph, such as "the new art" liked to paint. For the matter of that, at this time the fashion had changed; the angular, the osseous, thin-as-a-rail style was no longer held up as the ideal of feminine beauty. Arms like sticks, making a triangle at the elbow and terminating in huge hands; rectangular shoulders, from between which rises conically a neck displaying all the tendons; hips so narrow that the whole figure has the shape of a perpendicular worm, writhing even when it is not stepped on — all this, according to general taste, had given place again to the round, soft, and wavy line which has always prevailed as the line of beauty in the creations of Nature.

Franka practiced the greatest simplicity in her dress; she wore only smooth materials of one color, without any adornment of puffs, furbelows, or the like. Even though her toilette followed the fashion there was a stamp of originality and a personal touch in it. Her sleeves had invariably the well-known open Garlett shape. She always wore a bouquet of fresh violets at her belt. Her hair also was constantly dressed in the same way, the heavy black

braids coiled on top of her head and worn like a diadem. As adornment she wore only pearls, although the Sielen family jewels consisted of diamonds and all kinds of precious stones.

Victor Adolph's eyes studied her from head to foot — he was a great connoisseur and appraiser of the art of feminine dress: art in the true sense of the word; for only an artistic sense can succeed in so conforming the style, the color, and the character of a gown to the peculiarities of its wearer, so that the two make a harmonious picture. That evening, Franka wore a gown of light pale lilac; her silken shoes and stockings were also of lavender; a long string of pearls hung around her neck, and she had the bunch of violets at her breast, her white arms as usual were without gloves, her hands innocent of rings.

"You asked if our epoch needs monarchs? Prince, that is a strange question in your mouth."

"I have more than once noticed that if I say anything reasonable it arouses astonishment, because I happen to be a prince. Does n't that in itself imply that princes are superfluous? Indeed, is not the whole history of social progress marked by the gradual disappearance of once acknowledged necessities?"

Thus they talked for a while about generalities, but their interest and their thoughts were not so much directed to the subject of their conversation as to the mutual observation of their personalities; what they each felt was that they were satisfied with each other and that they were sympathetic. But others soon joined them and Prince Victor Adolph took his leave.

In another corner of the salon stood John A. Toker surrounded by a dozen of his most distinguished guests.

"I have just learned, my good friends," said Mr. Toker, "that in the course of the next few days the heads of two European countries are coming here in order to be present at some of our public functions — the King of Italy and the President of the French Republic. We must manage it so that the address 'The War in the Air' which is put down on our programme will be heard by these exalted personages. In the first place, there is nothing more interesting to the leaders of the nations than the subject, War. There is no surer guarantee of their fame: — if they carry it on, they are glorious War-Lords; if they manage to avoid it, then they are sublime Princes of Peace. In the second place, the way in which the war-problem is treated among us can only prove useful when it reaches the rulers of human society."

"Or the wide masses," remarked one of the bystanders.

"Well, yes," assented Toker; "the masses also constitute a ruling order. Whoever wishes the welfare of human society will not care whether it is attained from above or from below. Best of all, when both meet and complement each other."

The same bystander again remarked: "Opposites do not complement, but mutually destroy each other."

"Ah, my worthy friend," retorted Toker, "we must not be checked in our endeavors by such generalities. If phrases like that do contain a truth, still

we must find out whether they can be applied to the special case that lies before us. A thing must be seized from *all* sides. That offers the best chance of finally hitting upon the right side or several right sides. Not merely one road leads to Rome. All of you, my dear Knights of the Rose, are a living proof to me how varied are the ways that lead to the heights of Humanity — every one of you has struck out in a different path, and yet they all meet in —"

"Lucerne!" interpolated some one.

Toker nodded. "Quite right! In Lucerne: that means, since our 'Rose-Week,' something else than the mere name of a city."

With joyous pride he glanced around and summed up in his mind the valuation of the intellects there assembled. In fact, he had good reason to be proud, for among the great men who had come to Lucerne at his invitation were . . . Yet, the form in which this story is told, allowing events to be projected into the future, precludes calling the Knights of the Rose Order by name . . . So, then, no names — only a few incomplete data: —

A French author, regarded by his countrymen as the greatest of the living authors. No longer young, he has an enormous list of books to his credit; all brilliantly worked out with historical, prehistoric, and imaginary background, full of irony and full of wrath against social follies and absurdities, upright, bold, a warm worshiper before the altar of beauty.

A young Russian poet. The events of the Manchurian War, the horrors of the succeeding revolution, and of the still-more horrible counter-revolution

still played on his soul, just as the tempest plays on the strings of an æolian harp, enticing forth the most magical tones. He is waging a fierce, relentless war against society's most arrant enemy: against stupidity in all its forms; especially in the form of superstition and in that of the criminal folly which impels men to enthrall, to persecute, and to tear one another to pieces. His eyes are unspeakably sad, but resolution speaks from his features. He wields his lash savagely and pitilessly, not because he hates or despises mankind — on the contrary, he sees in it a temple from which he will drive the profaners in holy wrath.

A great tragédienne of the Latin stock. When she plays, she appears to express the lament of her own sorrow. Seeing her you involuntarily think of what some artless Madonna paintings show; a bleeding heart surrounded with a wreath of thorns. All the majesty that halos misfortune is expressed in her carriage, in the accent of her voice. She is beautiful, but her beauty is as it were veiled behind a dark crape. Truly her art is many-sided and she plays even gay parts; but what especially characterizes her is the reflection of human suffering which seems rather the exposure of her own. You cannot be a spectator of her acting and fail to be deeply moved, and a soul subjected to such emotion is a soul enobled at least during the time while the emotion lasts.

A German writer; a deep student of natural sciences. A prophet of an infinitely poetic natural philosophy, thereby exposed to the scornful and supercilious arrogance of technical and special scientists.

Not for him, to pigeonhole, to ticket, and to number; his outlook embraces the wide, all-circling horizon; his spirit penetrates into the All-Spirit; his knowledge and love of Nature soar up into worship; his books are literary masterpieces. And for this reason pedants are quivering with scorn, so that their very souls, being so dry, crack if his name is mentioned.

A French statesman and politician, a senator, and experienced diplomat: a man of the world to his finger-tips; full of witty turns and repartees in conversation; full of clear, conclusive logic in public speech; one of the most consistent and fearless speakers in the Senate. Fearlessness characterizes his eloquence, for he speaks against the tendencies of the day, against the chauvinistic-patriotic majority, against the proposals of his personal friend, the Minister of the Navy. In matters of international arbitration he is not only quick to support and suggest, but moreover to accomplish. To him are due agreements, compromises, treaties; many a web of ancient misunderstandings and jealousies has been obliterated from the world through his agency, and on this account the fanatical supporters of nationalism have even threatened his life.

An American inventor — one might rather say a wholesale inventor. People call him the wizard. He conducts his experiments *en gros*, by the bushel! The number of marvelous works for which his contemporaries and those to come have to thank him, the things which lift men up to higher levels of life, are beyond reckoning; and what is finest about them

is that not one of his instruments and pieces of apparatus is designed or fitted to serve purposes of destruction. The Mecca of all those who register patents — the ministries of war — is closed to his inventions. What he has elaborated and accomplished serves not for making human bodies into pulp; it has the modest aim of making life easier, more beautiful, and more enjoyable, and of enriching human society. One of his latest "trouvailles" — that of casting houses out of cement — had, at the time of the last Rose-Week at Lucerne, already found so much popular acceptance that quite commonly these cheap, quickly erected, and at the same time æsthetic and hygienic domiciles were being built, — that is to say, cast, — and simultaneously an end was put to one of the greatest of evils — the wretched housing of the poor, from which a third of the prevalent vice and illness springs.

A dramatic author from England; sparkling with wit and intellect, who writes the bitterest satires, but with a background of tenderness; also an ameliorator of the world and mankind, not, indeed, by saying to men, "Become better," but by endeavoring, by his ridicule, to exterminate whatever makes them bad. He tears off hypocritical masks and shows the ugly grimaces behind them; on the other hand, he has the knack of entwining a gentle halo around poor and humble forms, around the oppressed, the misunderstood, the mistaken. Humor has been defined as a smile and a tear; in his humor the contrast is much stronger: it is the sobbing laughter of scorn.

A Scandinavian woman devoted to philosophy, full of the profound gentle wisdom of experience: an aged woman, who had never married or borne children, but who speaks with the tongue of angels about the sacredness of marriage and the rights of His Majesty the Child: a champion of free, proud individuality — that is to say, pretty much the same thing as Goethe called personality and designated as the loftiest happiness.

An American statesman: the man whose motto runs: "The same moral law that holds among individuals must also prevail among nations"; a motto which is diametrically opposed to the principles on which hitherto the "classical polities" of the most celebrated European statesmen have been founded. Our American looks back on a long, beneficent career. Peaceful victories, positive, not negative, peaceful victories, have been won by him. His great work has been the successful bringing together of the two halves of America into one great Union. Moreover, during his administration he has concluded a large number of permanent arbitration treaties with the States of Europe. Practically unknown to the general European public, he has cultivated a large part of that soil which modern culture has won away from the ancient dominion of War. Toker had a high regard for this man, who of all his guests stood nearest to him.

Another poet. The son of a small European country. To belong to a first-class Power is certainly not a condition, not even necessarily a help, to individual greatness. Dreamy, mysterious almost unreal are

this poet's stage productions. His prose works, on the contrary, are those of a clear, perspicuous thinker.

A German historian: one who has triumphantly introduced a new method into his range of studies — that of a philosophical synthesis. In his view, history is not the arraying of events in sequence, not the biographies of single personages who chance to stand in the foreground, but a process of social development which conditions the events and the personages — not the reverse. And he sees and proves that the way of this development leads always to higher organization; and, because he knows that and because he makes it known, he aids in hastening humanity's course along this way.

Still another inventor. This one had not as yet won world-repute, for his invention was of too recent occurrence. But Toker knew him and his work, and knew that he merited a Grand Cross in the Order of the Rose-Knights, not only for the greatness of his invention, but also for the greatness of the object which would be attained by it. Its first introduction to the public, its first demonstration, was to surprise the world during this very week.

A young composer from Russian Poland: a man whose works had come to the notice of the world during the last two years, but had taken the world by storm. His operas and symphonies had the most up-to-date richness of orchestration, the greatest originality of harmony, but were permeated by a heavenly sweetness of melody, such as had not in long years, perhaps never before, been heard. For this Rose-Week he had brought his latest creation,

never as yet publicly performed, — a quartette for violin, harmonium, harp, and baritone voice, entitled "Le Chant des Roses." It was perfectly appropriate that music and song should also have their part in this festal week which stood under the symbol of Height Achievement.

CHAPTER XIII

A LUNCHEON PARTY

A SMALL company of hotel guests who had been lunching together were sitting at their black coffee in a large special salon. It was the first day of the second Rose-Week, and the opening festival was to take place that evening. The conversation of the gay little party, which consisted of two ladies and four gentlemen, turned on the programme of the exercises.

One of the ladies was a Russian countess, a woman no longer young,—she must have been more than forty,—but still handsome and very elegant; she was the hostess at the luncheon. The other lady was a young widow, Annette Felsen, the cousin and companion of the countess; very lively, gay, and coquettish. The gentlemen were an elderly Frenchman, easily recognized as a former officer; a tall dark-eyed Italian, also past his first youth, for his wavy black hair was shot through with many silver threads. His name was Marchese Romeo Rinotti — a name which had a good repute in the political world and played a prominent part in the ministerial council of the kingdom. The two other gentlemen were Bruning and Regenburg.

The conversation ran now in French, now in German. Bruning had just been reading from the paper the names of Toker's guests, and then remarked that

Chlodwig Helmer, who on the following day was to read from his poem "Schwingen," was a friend of his.

"Ah," cried the Countess Vera, "that is interesting — you must introduce him to us — I dote on poets . . . not so much as on musicians, though. I confess frankly that what attracts me most in the whole programme is 'Le Chant des Roses.' This young Pole is simply divine . . . though I don't like the Poles, because they hate us. But what kind of a man is your friend?"

"Oh, a fine fellow, only somewhat high-strung. I also know Fräulein Garlett. She, too, comes from my country. I should like to see these two make a match; they are admirably suited to each other: neither is quite normal and she is extremely rich. I should like to see my friend marry her."

"But is n't this girl an agitator for the emancipation of women?" asked the old Frenchman, Baron Gaston de la Rochère? "One does not marry such a person."

Madame Annette Felsen laughed: "Why, but you are quite *vieux jeu*, my dear Baron, quite *ancien régime* . . ."

The baron straightened himself up. "Yes, I flatter myself. . . . In this degenerating world there certainly ought to be a few people who stand by the old principles, the old true ideals. I am very anxious to know what doctrines the ladies and gentlemen of the Rose Order are going to preach. They will scarcely develop in a fitting way the highest concept there is: that of patriotism — since they belong to the most diversified countries, often opposed and

unfriendly to one another; and then tact will forbid their expressing openly their patriotic wishes. By the whole make-up of the programme and by many suspicious names among the participants — for example, I would never have sent here as a representative of France the Frenchman who is going to speak — by the various names, I believe there is danger that revolutionary ideas will be put forward more than is desirable. Indeed, the old order and the sacred traditions are so shaken that only a good war could possibly set things straight again. Then we should have the chance to restore to the throne of France a monarch appointed by God, one who would once for all drive out the radical and free-masonic rabble which at the present time puts our country to shame. And even if there were no one of royal blood, still if there were a victorious soldier — a war-hero . . ."

Countess Vera uttered a little shriek. "Do not speak of war, mon colonel . . . it is now many years ago . . . but the Manchurian campaign with all its consequences still trembles in all my nerves. . . . Did n't the peasants burn my castle? The war itself would not have been anything . . . that is as God wills; but the terrible revolution afterwards . . . and that would break out again after another war . . . there are so many nihilists among us. It was, indeed, a piece of good luck that they could choke off the revolution — the saints helped once more, and genuine Russians remained faithful to the Tsar, who ought never to have granted a constitution . . ."

"Vera, Vera," interrupted Madame Annette,

"do not talk about politics. There, please light a cigarette. . . . I will take one, too, and if politics is to be talked about, then will you do the talking, Marchese! you certainly ought to understand the subject, you who are the diplomat, the prominent statesman, the Italian Bismarck!"

The marchese offered the ladies a light. "A diplomat," said he, "should rather be silent than speak, but I can comfort the colonel by saying that the prospects for a war in Europe are growing brighter and brighter. Perhaps he will see the beautiful times of the *ancien régime* return. As far as I am concerned, my yearning to bring back the past goes still farther back. The only true, beautiful, fiery, proud life was at the time of the Renaissance. Life was not regarded, men took no care of it, but they lived intensely. . . . Those adventures, those riotous magnificences of living and of art, that wild existence, that lordly power of unscrupulousness! . . ."

He had worked himself into a passion of eloquence, and at his final words an almost Satanic smile, which showed his white teeth, flickered around his mouth. Annette looked at him in amazement: —

"You would have made a splendid *condottiere*, signor. What do *you* say, Herr Regenburg?"

The famous sportsman had scarcely understood; he was not very fluent in French, but now that he was called upon to give his opinion, he had to say something, whether well or ill. He tittered rather idiotically.

"Why, yes, my dear lady, it is fine to have a bit of a row; we must have some slashing about. . . .

But you are quite right, Marchese, and so are you, Colonel — the old days ought to come back again."

He waved his liqueur-glass and emptied it at one gulp. . . .

"Old times do not return," said Bruning; "neither the times of Napoleon, nor those of the Sun-King, nor those of the Medici. But whoever delights in unscrupulousness and lack of consideration has no need to mourn over the present: attacking and oppressing, in order to attain power or to preserve it, is still in sway, even though in a different manner, and will probably always continue, for the emblems of worldly success remain claws and teeth — or at least elbows."

A hotel valet came in and handed Bruning a card.

"Ah, my friend Helmer," said he, rising. "Allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to leave you; I must receive him."

"Is that the poet — the author of 'Schwingen'?" asked Countess Vera. "Please ask him to come here; we should all be so pleased to meet him."

"If you permit it"; and, turning to the servant: "Show the gentleman in."

Bruning went to meet Helmer at the door: "'T was good of you to look me up. You find me in a little company who are eager to make your acquaintance. Allow me to present you: my fellow-countryman and schoolmate, the boldest aviator of the present . . ."

Helmer shook his head: "I have never been in an airship in my life."

"But you fly up into the bluest heights on the wings of your verse."

"Indeed; I had always heard only of verse-feet."

Bruning continued his introductions: "The Countess Vera Petrovna Solnikova, of Petersburg, who has had the kindness to invite us to a feast of Lucullus; Madame Felsen, from Reval; Baron Gaston de la Rochère, from Bretagne; His Excellency, Marchese Rinotti, from Rome, the coming director of the destinies of Italy; and this is Herr Regenburg, the well-known Viennese sportsman. And now, tell us — does the Rose-Spectacle start off to-day?"

The Countess Vera motioned Helmer to sit down and offered him a cup of coffee, which he accepted.

"Yes," said she; "tell us how it is all planned — the programme is so indefinite. Shall we hear you to-day?"

"No, not to-day. To-day a great man is going to speak," — and he mentioned the name of the French author, — "and there are to be others. Yet I must not tell you. It is characteristic of Mr. Toker's programme, that no programme is announced. If the public should know in advance on which day this or that person was to speak and know what would be the subject, then they would be able to pick and choose, and Mr. Toker wants all to be heard by all. It is like a salon, where the guests do not know what sort of artistic offerings are to be presented. It is all a surprise."

"If I can only succeed in hearing one of that

divine Polish master's compositions, than I shall be rewarded for having made the journey to Lucerne," said the countess, with a sentimental upward glance of her eyes. "And you, Annette, you are especially crazy over Mlle. Garlett, the famous feminist, aren't you?"

"Yes, that I am, although I do not care about women's rights, but I have heard so much about that lady . . ."

"Fräulein Garlett is no '*Feminist*,'" interrupted Helmer eagerly, "and she does not preach emancipation. She is not so desirous of winning rights for women as of doing away with ancient prerogatives, which they possess to the injury of all."

"How so? what prerogatives?" asked the others.

"Of being idle; of having an empty brain; of disclaiming all care for the common weal; of thinking themselves absolved from the bother of logical thought . . . and so of robbing humanity of half its intellectual working power."

"I don't understand you," said Annette.

"Oh, I understand!" exclaimed M. de la Rochère. "Women are to mix in politics. How advantageous that is has been shown by the *tricoteuses* around the guillotine and the *pétroleuses* during the Commune. . . . Woman is a *créature d'amour*. . . . Wife, mistress, odalisque . . . that is our French ideal!"

"In Germany, also, a feminine ideal has been established," remarked Bruning; "that of three capital K's: — *Kirche*, *Kinder*, *Küche* — church, children, kitchen."

The Italian Minister turned the conversation:

"Do you know, Herr Helmer, two years ago, when I was passing through Berlin, I attended the première of your last drama and was delighted at its great success. I hope the piece is to be given soon on the Italian stage."

"Indeed, Your Excellency, that has actually been arranged for — it is to be presented next winter at Milan."

"Unless in the mean time," said Bruning, laughing, "the great European war should break out which the signor marchese predicts."

Helmer shrugged his shoulders. "Oh, yes, that famous unavoidable European war of the future, which has been announced for many long years, but which nevertheless, so far, has been warded off."

"So you still think it avoidable, do you?" asked the Countess Vera.

"I consider it impossible. Unless Europe takes up with a suicidal policy."

Bruning tapped Helmer on the shoulder: "This shows what an incorrigible idealist you are — deaf and blind to the coarse realities of life. You look on men as angels, while in reality they are beasts."

Helmer impatiently shook Bruning's hand from his shoulder: "Present company excepted, it is to be hoped," said he. "But you know that I will not have a controversy with you."

The sportsman wanted to smooth things over. "It is to be hoped that Herr Helmer is right — for if a war were to break out, all securities would go down seriously. But still, if it should happen, it would be

a wholesome letting of blood. And who can prevent the decrees of history?"

"Oh, history, history," exclaimed Helmer, in a tone of vexation. "Does history make us or do we make history? If you put yourself before the mirror and make up faces, can one say, when there is an ugly reflection, 'who can prevent the grimaces of the mirror'?"

"There is no use discussing," said the marchese. "On general grounds it seems to me, my dear poet, that you do not have a very sound comprehension of affairs here below. You soar up into a world of thought and do not see what positive facts bring. You do not know what seething and fermentation are going on in the lower regions of political and social life; how friction and tension are increasing, and how ultimately — and very soon, too, — there must be an explosion."

"In other words, you consider me blind, Your Excellency? Of course, I know right well that there is seething and fermentation. It certainly cannot continue as it is now; a mighty change — what you call an explosion — is before us, — I agree to that. We have entered upon the age of the air, the age of the heights. The depths are to be left behind. All that is low is to be conquered. Not by forcible destruction — but it will disappear, will sink away. . . . Have you ever made a voyage in an airship and gone up high, Your Excellency? If you have, you found that it was not so much a mounting into the upper regions as it was a sinking away of what was below. I know of things which are in preparation,

which are unknown to you and which are to be revealed during our Rose-Week. In our midst sojourns an inventor, a conqueror . . . yet I must not betray secrets." He stood up. "I must be going. I hope I shall see you all this evening at our opening session."

CHAPTER XIV

DREAMS OF LOVE

"Ninon, Ninon, que fais-tu de la vie, toi qui vis sans amour?"

THE text of this song haunted Franka's memory. She was reclining on the couch in her little salon, her arms crossed behind her head, her eyes closed.

The red silk shades at the windows were drawn and a ruddy twilight permeated the room. All the salons in the suites put at the disposal of Mr. Toker's guests had red hangings and white walls. The chairs and sofas were rose-colored. The carpets showed red roses on a white ground. The sleeping-rooms were also upholstered in these two colors, and the bath-rooms attached to each apartment were fitted with rose-marble. Toker did not want his guests to be for a single minute free from the spell of roses. Even the water, as it flowed through the faucets at the wash-stands, was perfumed with roses, and rose-scented soap was provided. The chandeliers were of pale-rose glass and a rose-colored shade protected every electric lamp.

Frau Eleonore was sitting at the writing-table of the little salon and was writing picture-postcards for the whole circle of her acquaintance. Now and then she interrupted this occupation and glanced over at Franka.

"There, you have been lying for almost an hour perfectly motionless, my dear; were you asleep?"

"No, only thinking."

"Were you meditating on your coming address?"

"No, I am thinking — for a wonder — of myself. I am putting Franka Garlett timid questions and she is answering them hesitatingly."

"Might one know what the subject of this interesting inquisition is?"

"It is too vague to be expressed in words."

"Yet I think I can imagine: the first question put by the inquisitor to the victim runs: 'Confess! how did yesterday's prince please you?'"

"You think so, do you?" She shook her head, laughing; "you are on the wrong track."

"Indeed! Then, perhaps . . ."

"Please do not *you* take upon yourself the office of investigator. . . . Instead, please go on writing your 'cordial greetings from Lucerne' and let me think for a while longer."

"Very well; I must post a dozen or more cards before the mail is collected."

Franka again took up the thread of her thoughts as before . . . "*Toi qui vis sans amour.*" . . . Now for the first time, called up by Frau Eleonore's jesting words, arose Victor Adolph's picture before her. She had certainly not been thinking of him before. Only of love in general: not even of that — rather of the sense of troublous unsatisfying yearning which occasionally took possession of her and caused her pain — a feeling of emptiness, of melancholy . . . and as if to give some explanation for it, she had been repeating to herself the words of that French song.

Was it possible that her life's failure consisted in the

fact that it was without love? She had given herself with zeal and enthusiasm to a great idea, to a great object, and had relentlessly waved aside everything else. She had accomplished her lofty task and her success had brought her great satisfaction. She had made known perfectly new theories regarding the rights and duties of women and had been able to impose them on others. So successful had her work been that she had won a reputation confirmed by her enrollment in the Order of the Knights of the Roses, and yet . . . and yet . . . there was this yearning. . . . What for? If it were for love, how came it that no one of those who had come into her vicinity had awakened that passion in her heart? Not one had attracted her, or even for a moment put her senses into a tumult. Though often, whether in a dream or in a book she was reading, the glamour of artistic impressions or of mild spring nights, a sudden glow swept through her veins, oppressing her, it was never associated with the image of any special man. And if an impulse swelled her heart toward tenderness, — not toward passionate bliss, but toward a sincere, gentle tenderness, — then she had no idea whom she should bless with it.

No, she had not been thinking of the prince; she was trying to formulate another recollection of the evening before: that moment, when in her terror at a vision in the firmament, she had rested her hand on Helmer's arm . . . and the feeling of calmness, of refuge, of sweet security, which had come over her. Once again, now that the interruption caused by Frau Eleonore was past, she closed her eyes and

tried to recall her former sensation: she succeeded in doing so: the sense of refuge and security was there once more, and sweetly rang the words: "A warm house and a loving heart in it" . . .

"Dear heart," she murmured.

Frau Eleonore stood up: "What did you say? Do you wish anything?"

At the same instant a groom entered and brought a great gilded basket filled with Parma violets. A visiting-card lay in it: Prince Victor Adolph von X——.

When Helmer took his departure, Bruning also bade good-bye to the little luncheon coterie with the intention of accompanying his friend.

"You still owe me a call," said he; "won't you come up to my room for a little while? No? Then let me go a part of the way with you. How did you like the two ladies? Shall I tell you something about them?"

"I 'd rather hear about the Italian Minister—the man interests me."

"I can believe it. There is no one in all Europe more interesting at the present time. He is of the clay from which the Cavours, the Talleyrands, the Bismarcks, and the Chamberlains are made. One who can talk fluently of future events, of fermentations and collisions, because he himself is one who causes events to come, who ferments and collides."

"Oh, is that so?"

"You swear by that school which does not believe

in the power of individuals to influence the history of nations? It is your idea, that the nameless masses, that all-powerful Necessity, and the like, condition the course of history . . ."

"There you are again with your 'history.' If you mean by it the changes that result from universal conditions, then, certainly, the laws of nature and the nameless masses, unconsciously obeying them, form the motive power; but if it concerns the events that are brought about by the intrigues of diplomats and despots and the newspapers that are subservient to them, then I grant that this kind of history is made by ambitious and unscrupulous individuals."

"Well, then, if that is undersood, my Romeo Rinotti is just a history-maker. 'Unscrupulousness' is his fetish . . . in fact, it *is* the reasonable basis of all real politics. Rinotti is not as yet at the helm, else a portentious chapter in the history of our century would have been written long ago; but he will yet come to the helm, and then . . . well, he makes no secret of the lofty aims which he has conceived for the grandeur and glory of his country. Whether he will attain them is, indeed, another question; I have *my* doubts; for fortunately we in Austria, we also have resolute men in leading positions . . . a fine, proud imperialism has flowered since Aehrenthal's great stroke of genius; and our military strength, as well as that of our allies, is to be reckoned with. . . . Our fleet of airships also makes a good showing. So Rinotti's bold plans will scarcely be fulfilled, in spite of all Slavic assistance . . . but whatever the con-

sequences may be, the impulse will suffice, as I said, to produce a mighty chapter in history. I must say, although the man is really our enemy, he inspires me with respect, because of his powerful will: universal history needs such chaps. At the same time, he is a fascinating man. . . . The women are all crazy over him . . . that Baltic woman, for example. . . . Did you notice how her eyes were riveted on him? If the Countess Solnikova has not fallen under his spell, it is only thanks to her fancy for your composer. . . . But here I am chattering away and you do not say a word . . . apparently you are up in the clouds again, your favorite habitation, and probably have not been listening to what I said."

"On the contrary, I have been listening with all attention. What you tell me of Rinotti interests me immensely. It proves clearly, once more, how our official world is still entangled in the ancient concepts and methods, how men cannot see what the needs of the age are. They do not suspect that the epoch of cabinet intrigues is just as obsolete, though not so far removed from us, as the Tertiary or the Miocene period. Or are we really still in the very midst of it? Am I the one who does not see the actuality, because my eyes are fixed too eagerly on the future, just as the eyes of the Rinottis and their admirers are directed toward the past? However, I am very grateful to you, for what you have told me shows how imperative the work is which must be the outcome of the Rose-Week."

"You incorrigible visionary! Do you really imagine that Toker, Helmer, and Company are going to

lift the world out of its hinges? I have permitted myself to compare the undertaking of this worthy firm to Hagenbeck; I might have said that it is a great cosmopolitan variety-show . . . well, I am curious; especially for your number on the programme: — 'Mr. Chlodwig Helmer, prestidigitator on the poets' ladder.' But here we are at your lodgings — I will leave you. No offense, I hope . . ."

Helmer shrugged his shoulders: "I know you of old, and if I am inwardly annoyed at your cynicism, I don't lay it up against you."

"And I likewise pardon you for calling my modicum of common sense and mother wit cynicism. Such a long-established comradeship is n't going to be broken up by such quizzing. The earth would be boresome if it contained nothing but mere practical people — a few dreamers must be allowed to practice their somnambulism. *Servus*, old fellow."

Bruning said good-bye at the entrance door of the Rose-Palace; Helmer, however, did not go in, but walked off in another direction. The conversation with his boyhood friend had given a serious trend to his thoughts, and he was not inclined at the moment to meet any of Mr. Toker's guests and converse with them. He preferred a solitary walk.

He knew a path which led from the shore of the lake to a distant grove where it was very silent and pleasant: thither he directed his steps. He had often in his life found that when he was vexed with men — either with individual men or with human society at large — he was immediately pacified by taking refuge with Nature. To him Nature, the mother of all

creatures — Nature, the generous, the life-abounding, the sublime, the unfathomable, the inexorable keeper of her own mysteries, the never disobedient servant of her own laws, the spendthrift and miser of her own treasures — to him Nature was not some thing, but some one. A some one whom he loved with awe and whose magical gifts he accepted as the token of some measure of reciprocal love.

He strolled for some distance along the shore of the lake; boats large and small were darting across its mirror-like surface. Snow-capped mountains arose in the background. Helmer appreciated the imposing beauty of the whole landscape; but what he wanted to find was a retired, circumscribed spot without a broad outlook, without the effect of theatrical decorations or panoramic views, a little place, where he might be alone with a few trees and a few wild flowers. So he turned aside into a narrow path between two wooded hills, and after a short walk entered the dark, cool corner which he was looking for. There nothing was to be seen worthy of being called "a splendid region" or of being remarked as bearing a characteristic Swiss flavor; the little assemblage of firs and birches, of oaks and beeches, of stunted bushes, of mossy stones, and tall grasses might have been duplicated in any other place in Europe. The sunlight danced in the lightly waving foliage and a delicious perfume of gum and strawberries filled the air. Blue and yellow and rose-colored flowers were blooming all about, wooed by fluttering white butterflies. Then there was a dreamily monotonous music of humming bees, chirping crickets, and murmuring

brooks, now and then interrupted by the clear call of the blackbird.

Helmer flung himself down in the grass at the foot of a leafy beech tree and — breathed. Really he did nothing else — without thoughts, without recollections, he lay there awhile and merely breathed. Long, joyous inhalations, just like all the plant brethren around him, the life of which is scornfully called "vegetating," although it is perhaps the purest form of the joy of existence. He contemplated a tiny beetle which was climbing laboriously up a swaying blade of grass, and in doing so lost its balance. A pair of very industrious ants, laden with building-materials, hastened by. A little green worm wriggled circumspectly, and as it drew its tail up to its head it made an arch, then stretched itself out again in order to make another — a complicated method of locomotion.

Helmer followed with friendly eyes all these movements which seem so important to those who make them. Also a beautiful gift of Nature, he said to himself, this consciousness of importance which is common to the most insignificant little creature, and which confers upon it a sort of dignity. And thus he began once more to take up the thread of thought. And the things also which he wanted to escape from began once more to recur in his mind: all the scornful, stupid, harmful conversation of all those people whose judgments and behavior lay so far removed from the realm toward which his poetic activities and yearning ran. In the circle of the Knighthood of the Rose, to be sure, he had found kindred spirits,

all working like himself to prepare the coming kingdom; but there were only two or three dozen of them, and the others were millions, and among them the very ones that had the most power and influence, rank and station . . . they form the great public and we . . . we are a number or two in a variety-show.

He shook his head. No, that is not true. We also have millions behind us — dumb, yearning millions, who are only waiting for the liberating act. The liberating act, however, must be forestalled by the liberating word . . . so let us first say just what we have to say.

He passed in review the scheme of his poem. Did it express everything that in hours of inspiration swept before his mind? Alas, no! Far, far from it — there still remained much work for him to do. The problems, the subjects crowded in upon him — every day with its new experiences brought new ideas. Especially this last week, by contact with the great artists and thinkers, who surpassed him in so many ways, so many new horizons had opened before him. It was, indeed, a marvelous company. Franka must assuredly be grateful to him that she had been invited to be present, for he had suggested to her the career which she had so brilliantly followed. Franka . . . his thoughts dwelt longer at this name, at the picture which it called up. How confidingly, how beseechingly, as if asking his aid, she had clung to him. . . . It made his heart glow. He was not thinking now of her genius, of her beauty, but rather of that helplessness . . . oh, if he could only hold her in his arms to protect her and to comfort

her. . . . Pshaw, what nonsense! she needed no protection; she was a wealthy, influential lady, with everything at her command. Yesterday, after that brief minute on the terrace, she went into the salon and was instantly surrounded; that prince had paid her his homage most openly. And such a handsome, seductive man that Victor Adolph . . . If she, the proud beauty, wanted to have a love-affair, what more did she need to do than make a sign in order to have her pick among the highest, the most distinguished? . . . "Can it be that I am jealous? . . . No, thank God, I am not in love with her; one does not covet the stars. I will even advise her now to think of her own happiness. It was my fault to a certain degree that she, so Joan-of-Arc-like, shut her heart up in an iron breastplate. I gave her that counsel, that terrible counsel . . ."

CHAPTER XV

RINOTTI AND PRINCE VICTOR ADOLPH

THE MARCHESE RINOTTI, after having taken his leave of the Countess Vera and her cousin, went to his room to see whether during his absence anything had come to him by mail requiring his attention. He was expecting important advices. Although he was traveling for pleasure and recreation, still he kept in constant touch with all the activities of his post, and even here was working in the business which he was secretly trying to further.

He was in a highly excited state of mind. The news that he had read in the morning's papers indicated a crisis in various controversies, the obscuration of certain points on the political horizon; and this furnished a favorable field for his plans. What especially intensified his excitement was the retrospect of the last two hours, during which it had become clear to him that the pretty Baltic widow was passionately in love with him. She had sat next him at table. Those side glances, that coquettish smile, aye, even that far from abrupt drawing back of her little foot when he had accidentally touched it with his. . . . Rinotti was accustomed to this kind of triumph, but it always delighted him to see the evident signs of his mastery of the female heart — a double triumph, because he no longer possessed the attractive power of youth; — therefore it must be really some-

thing magnetic, something hypnotic and peculiar in him . . . or was it merely the force of his will, of his violent desires? There is nothing like violence; one may condemn it as brutal as much as one will — therein lies strength in war and in love. With such "Renaissance" thoughts he took up his bundle of letters, documents, and dispatches which were waiting for him on his writing-table and now set to work merrily.

He had an hour and a half free: at four o'clock he was to call on Prince Victor Adolph, to whom, since he was a royal highness, he wanted to show his profound respect. That the prince belonged to a country with which, according to Rinotti's calculations, a conflict was imminent, was no obstacle. The letters interested him intensely. The correspondents whom he had delegated in England and France, in Germany and Austria, in Russia and the Balkans, communicated to him details of all kinds of transparent intrigues even when there was nothing to see through, for they knew his predilections for diplomatic subterfuges and underground paths, and realized that their reports would be regarded as all the more sapient, the more they discovered evil motives concealed behind all political transactions and demonstrations.

Rinotti jotted down on a sheet of paper notes wherein swarmed a profusion of references to movements of troops, blockades of boundaries, *communiqués*, airship works, and the like. In the same breath he scribbled on another sheet of paper detached words and sentences like "Splendid creature," "lovely one," "You must be mine," "devouring

fire," and other ingredients of a glowing *billet doux* which that very evening he proposed to slip into Annette's hands at the Rose-Festival.

In the mean time Victor Adolph was expecting the promised visit. He was sitting on his balcony and lying back comfortably in a rocking-chair, with a book in his hand and a cigarette between his lips. He was not alone. His constant attendant, General von Orell, adjutant, tutor, *compagnon de plaisir*, paternal friend, and master of ceremonies, all in one person, was resting in a second rocking-chair, also engaged in smoking and reading. Only he was puffing a strong imported cigar and was reading a military aëronautical journal.

Victor Adolph glanced up from his reading: "Why, he is a real poet, this Helmer. . . . You ought to read 'Schwingen,' Orell, since you are so much interested in aviation, as I see from the title-picture of your journal."

The general politely laid his journal aside, as his prince was pleased to address him.

"Never read poems, Your Royal Highness."

"I know that, you are too 'matter-of-fact' for such things."

"Too what?" The general did not understand the English expression used by the prince.

"Too sober, too cold-hearted, too skeptical, too . . ."

"Too prosaic. Granted. Dry common sense. Practical mind. I flatter myself."

"What news in your journal? Any great advance in the art of flying?"

"Yes, great supplies of explosives can be carried by airships."

"Really? What a blessing. . . . Will not Signor Rinotti be here shortly?"

Orell glanced at his watch:—

"Quarter of an hour."

The general preferred not to say more words than were necessary.

"Have the violets been sent to the Rose-Palace?"

"Yes, Your Royal Highness. Pretty girl. But a bluestocking. . . . Shame!"

"Fräulein Garlett does not give the impression of being a bluestocking, but she is very clever."

"Women should not be clever."

The prince laughed. "You are fearfully *vieux jeu*, my dear Orell."

"Fearfully what?"

"Old-fashioned."

"I flatter myself; hate all modern follies. Modern technique, especially the technique of arms, also the modern mode of warfare interests me. Your Royal Highness is far too little interested in such things. Here are the experiences of the Russo-Japanese campaign. . . ."

"I know them. There is some of that in Veresayef's 'Recollections of a Physician,' and in Leonid Andreyef's 'Red Laughter.'"

"Your Royal Highness reads bad books with the rest."

"A piece of genuine good fortune that my royal father has not commissioned you to censor my reading."

"But his Majesty recommended me to procure useful books for Your Royal Highness."

"Yes, yes; those dealing with military science and Byzantine history. But I throw aside all such rubbish."

"And read socialistic pamphlets."

"What if I do? The social question interests me."

"Me, too. Must be settled. I know how to."

"Truly, do you know that? Here behold me all eagerness! Tell me how."

"Annihilate the whole crowd."

A cloud of dissatisfaction darkened Victor Adolph's face, but he made no reply. He had no desire to be drawn into a dispute. Orell's views were well known to him and he avoided as far as possible affording him any opportunity of expressing them. He took up his book again and lighted a fresh cigarette. Yet he did not read; he only let his mind dwell on the theme that had been broached. The social question really interested him intensely, and not superficially either; he had studied the thing itself. He had long been secretly a subscriber to "Vorwärts," and many times he had succeeded in smuggling himself into the assemblies of the local labor union, and once he had been present, unrecognized, at an international congress of Socialists. Not everything was clear to him in the doctrinaire aspects of the question, but deep in his heart he was on the side of those who are trying to obtain for the masses of the nations the joys and dignities of life. In order to get a clear notion of the battle against poverty, he would have had to make a study of poverty and see for himself; and

then horrible abysses of woe would have opened before him; abysses of which people of his class and in general of all classes, that do not belong to the proletariat, have for the most part no conception.

And one thing particularly embittered him: the fearful lack of comprehension which he met with when he merely mentioned the subject in his own circles. No one seemed to have an idea of what was at issue. Poverty? Yes, that was found everywhere, but it always had existed and always would exist: there is no remedy, except to distribute alms, to establish free soup-kitchens, and so on, and that sort of thing is provided generously. To practice charity is certainly one of the cardinal virtues, and a host of people, notably the women of princely families, are in the front ranks, setting a good example! . . .

Naturally, there are also discontented people — the lazy who do not want to work or the rascally fellows who are always after higher wages in order to have more gin to drink. But especially guilty of the discontent are the agitators, the so-called leaders, the mischief-making demagogues. Opposition parties, revolutionary parties, — such have always been, — and the only remedy against them is iron firmness. As a last resort one always has the military to preserve the established order. Force is the best, indeed, the only security: the threat of armed force restrains the rabble. Without this wholesome fear the Reds would soon be on hand to plunder property-owners or to vote that all property should be shared equally — such nonsense! As if after such a division the industrious and the clever would not shortly possess

more than the lazy and the rascally, and then there would be an end of all the famous equality . . . no, no, those are idle dreams. . . . Inequality is founded on Nature.

These and similar phrases Victor Adolph had always been obliged to hear when Socialism was mentioned in his environment. With especial violence the opponents of a cause always succeed in demolishing the postulates that are never put forward by its advocates. "Equal division of property" — what Socialist would have ever demanded such a thing? Public possession, State possession is not equally divided possession — it is common possession, like the air we breathe.

The prevalent misconception which aroused Victor Adolph's wrath extended not only to the nature of the social movement, but also to its progress. What it has already accomplished in organization, in clearing the way, what it is on the point of doing, those who stand aloof do not know. They frequently talk about the laws of nature, but only to draw from them the conclusion that all things will and must remain as they are. And they are ready to assist this well-beloved *vis inertiæ* with laws and clubs and cannon, but what the existing circumstances, what the events will bring forth in natural consequences; — they have no notion about that. With irresponsible frivolity they let come what may. They see nothing of the approaching flood; should there really be a shower or two, they have their umbrellas ready.

Victor Adolph had not himself penetrated far

enough into the domain of social and economic affairs to predict how the movement would develop, but he followed it with deep sympathy, and was impelled to do so by two honorable motives, — desire for knowledge and love for his fellow-men.

The prince was aroused from his thoughts by the announcement — "His Excellency, Marchese Rinotti." The general went to meet the visitor and brought him to the prince. After the first ceremonious greetings had been exchanged, obsequiously on the part of the diplomat, with friendly dignity on the part of the prince, the prince invited the marchese to sit down, and began the conversation with the question: "Is it decided that your king is coming here this week?"

"Yes, Your Royal Highness, in three days His Majesty will arrive."

"And will he attend the exercises in the Rose-Palace?"

"That is his intention."

"A great honor for the American," remarked the general.

The prince shrugged his shoulders. "Well, I doubt if Mr. Toker has so much awe before crowned heads as your loyal mind ascribes to him, my dear Orell."

"I have my doubts as to that point, also," said Rinotti. "Mr. Toker belongs to that caste of moneyed potentates who regard themselves as kings. And in a certain sense they are, indeed, for they wield a dominion over a monstrous, a sinister power. Old Europe must take precious good care of her prestige, must stick closer than ever to her traditions, if she

would hold her own against the spirit of Americanism."

"That is a vague term," said the prince. "What do you mean by 'Americanism'?"

Rinotti's keen-cut face took on a contemptuous expression. "I mean by it stock-jobbery and wild quest for money; lack of ideality, of anything romantic, of heroism; their poverty in historical recollections and national art amply accounts for this. They have nothing of all that which constitutes our pride, which enriches and ennobles us: ancient monuments, cathedrals, old paintings, famous field-marshals, illustrious families, glorious dynasties of rulers — all that is missing to the New World; and what can it offer in their place? — sky-scrapers, gigantic steel, meat, and oil trusts, California gold-mines, and possibly Niagara Falls! That I will grant as the one thing poetic — but in everything else it is a land of mediocrity, of aridity, of the barrenest prose."

The general nodded his assent: "Quite right."

Victor Adolph angrily crushed his cigarette into the ash-tray. "You say, 'Quite right.' I say, 'Quite false,' essentially false. I know America. You do not know it. I spent a year at Harvard University. You have no conception of the warmth of enthusiasm, of the generosity, of the wide outlook, of the world-embracing ideas — in a word, of the lofty ideals which animate that free, youthful-hearted people . . ."

"What fire, Your Royal Highness!" exclaimed the marchese. "Your own youthful enthusiasm is speaking. I love it and I admire it, especially in a Northerner."

The prince made an impatient deprecatory gesture with his hand. "Do you know," said he, "that the International Agricultural Institute in Rome, the foundation of which was a great glory for King Victor Emanuel III, because it is intended for the service and advantage of all men, owes its origin to an American? The man's name was Lubin. He made a trip to Europe on purpose to bring this idea of his to the sovereigns; with your king, whose mind is open to grand new ideas, he found appreciation and support."

"I am glad Your Royal Highness has so good an opinion of my sovereign. I hope also that Italy under his scepter will continue to accumulate stores of glory. My country faces great tasks . . ."

"Undoubtedly," interrupted Victor Adolph; "for example, the amelioration of poverty in Sicily, the drainage of all malaria-producing swamps, the diminution of the illiterate . . . oh, great tasks are to be performed everywhere, not in Italy alone . . ."

"In America as well?" asked Rinotti ironically.

"Certainly, in America as well; and possibly the example will be given us from there."

The prince stood up. Rinotti understood this to be a hint that the interview was at an end: he also arose and took a ceremonious farewell. The general accompanied him to the door and then returned to the prince.

"Desires to thank you again for your gracious reception."

"The man is antipathetic to me," replied the prince.

"He is false. Intriguer. Mind full of mischief. That is evident. Intends to play our ally nasty tricks; only waiting till he becomes Prime Minister. Then things will explode! Boundless ambition. Believes that with the Italian airships — and it is true they are swift — they can annihilate Austria's fleet. But we are all ready for him."

"You are always imagining wars and rumors of wars, my dear Orell, like the Old Men's chorus in 'Faust.' But if that worthy statesman should really have such notions up his sleeve, he would run counter to his king's desire for peace. And, moreover, the Italian people have some sense."

"What is that — the people?"

CHAPTER XVI

THE SIELENBURG PARTY

ELDERLY ladies of the Austrian aristocracy have no great inclination for traveling. While for a hundred years it has been the fashion in England to make a tour on the Continent, and while in the days of mail-coaches, noblewomen, young and old, were accustomed to accompany their spouses to Switzerland and to Italy, to Paris and to the German baths, the ladies of the Austrian nobility have only reluctantly quitted their castles in order to journey to other countries. Since traveling has been made so easy and expeditious, especially since automobiles came into fashion, the younger feminine element of the higher Austrian circles have ventured to make trips into distant lands. But even at the time of the Rose-Week, there were among the elder aristocratic women some who had never before set foot outside the boundaries of the Empire. Among these was the Countess Adele Schollendorf. But, nevertheless, one fine June morning the old lady, accompanied by her cousin Albertine, started for Lucerne. Two cavaliers also made up the party: Cousin Coriolan and Baron Ludwig Malhof.

The motive of the expedition was curiosity. Count Sielen's sister had become quite estranged from her grand-niece since the latter had begun to appear on the public platform. The affair was too distasteful

to her — it cut entirely across all her prejudices. Franka had, indeed, lost nothing in reputation and respect by her action — on the contrary; but the old countess could not be reconciled to it. She did not go so far as to indulge in open reproach and rupture, being restrained by the fact that she was indebted to Franka's generosity for her home at the Sielenburg and the considerable revenues accruing from this property; but she had renounced all personal intercourse, which was the easier, because Franka, on her part, took no pains to maintain it. For no money in the world would the Countess Adele have consented to attend the young girl's lecture in Vienna. A connection — a person with the Sielen blood in her veins — on the platform, speaking in favor of the emancipation of women! Horrible! But when one day Baron Malhof brought the news that Franka Garlett had been invited to take her place with the greatest celebrities of the day at the Rose-Week celebration, — and he described the Toker Rose-Week with enthusiasm, having himself been present at one, — the old countess's curiosity was awakened: "I should like to see it," she exclaimed.

"Then let us go there," proposed Malhof. And he argued so eloquently that the countess decided to take the journey — the first she had ever made out of her own country. There, so far away, she might, indeed, endure to see Franka on the platform; only at home, among all her relatives and acquaintances, it would have been too painful. But there — "there" being somewhat confused in her mind with the an-

tipodes — one was, so to speak, *incognito*. Albertine consented to accompany her cousin, although the expedition seemed to her very portentous and adventurous; but, possibly, she might have the opportunity of telling this Franka, who had so unceremoniously slipped out from under her influence, a few verities which would redound to her advantage.

Cousin Coriolan joined the party from the purpose of studying into the "humbug." . . . Toker was a fool, and the whole affair was a piece of modern sham. Baron Malhof, widely experienced, offered his services as marshal for the journey: to engage lodgings, to see to the luggage, to act as *cicerone*, and in general to superintend all the details of the trip. But when he suggested making the journey to Lucerne in an airship, Countess Adele protested with horror.

They arrived the evening before the exercises were to begin; they had enjoyed a good night's sleep, and were now sitting at their breakfast-coffee in the dining-room. They were glancing through the newspaper, to find what announcements were made about the coming performances: but all they found were the list of Toker's guests, and the statement that the same motto should serve for all the addresses: "When thoughts will soar . . ."

"I am curious to know what that means," muttered Coriolan; "probably a kind of preaching about all sorts of high-flying, so called Ideals. It may be very edifying, but not very exciting."

"As far as I can judge of you, my dear Coriolan,"

said Malhof, "you would be neither excited nor edified by the things which are to be heard here. Just as the American and the operatic host which he has invited are the representatives of the latest and boldest ideas, so you . . ."

Countess Adele interrupted: "Well, if Franka's emancipation absurdities are to be called soaring. . . . This honey is famous — taste it, Baron Malhof; and this crisp-toasted bread . . . it seems to me the Swiss are used to an abundant breakfast."

"*Kipfel* are best with coffee," remarked Albertine ecstatically.

Coriolan nodded assent. "But *Gugelhupf* has some claim upon us," he added.

"We have wandered far from high-soaring thoughts again," remarked Baron Malhof.

Countess Adele spread some more honey on her toast. "I'm curious to see how Franka looks . . ."

"Probably prettier than ever — she is a ravishing creature . . ."

"What fire, Baron Malhof!"

"Yes, I confess, Fräulein Garlett was my last flame. . . . Oh, not a very creditable story, as far as I was concerned. I tried to — well, never mind what I tried — but she gave me a pretty rebuff. As to emancipation, as you keep saying, Countess, nothing of that could be seen in her. A virtuous maiden of the old-fashioned model . . ."

"Excuse me, but in order to resist you . . ."

"One need not be so very virtuous — were you going to say, Madam? That is true, but the circumstances under which I was repulsed, and the

way in which she did it, certainly indicated the much-praised 'fundamental principles.'"

"Don't you approve of them?"

"I never have, most gracious Countess."

"I know, I know; you have the reputation of having been a genuine Don Juan. However, as far as Franka is concerned, she seems to have kept her head. In spite of this adventurous life—this gallivanting about and making speeches, nothing discreditable has ever been charged against her."

"So much the worse for her."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, if one hears nothing bad about a young woman, it means that nothing pleasant has happened to her."

"You are a terrible man! Albertine, we ought never to have trusted ourselves to his escort!"

The old maid did not understand the joke. "Why not?" she asked earnestly. "He is certainly a very respectable gentleman. But do you know, Baron Malhof, I should like to give you one piece of advice: you ought not to comb your back hair over your bald spot. Excuse my frankness; but it is not at all becoming to you."

The baron nervously and awkwardly moved his hand over the place to which such invidious attention had been called. "Good Heavens! One does the best one can . . ."

"Oh, you, with your everlasting frankness," exclaimed the countess reprovingly.

Coriolan went on reading his newspaper. "Here

among the names of the Rose comedians stands that of a Herr Helmer; was n't that fool Jew, who was Eduard's last secretary, named Helmer?"

"Yes, that was his name," replied Countess Adele. "But he was n't a Jew."

"Well, his maternal grandmother was Jewish, and that is pretty much the same thing."

"So was our common ancestor Adam," said Malhof angrily. "Especially here, in this free and democratic Switzerland, you should not assume that tone. Here one must not brag too much of race and rank."

A wrathful scowl contracted the brows of the haughty aristocrat. "I certainly shall speak my mind. Democracy does not impose on me. Besides, here, in Switzerland there are a few very good old families, even if they don't have titles. For instance, there are the Hallwyls; only recently I subscribed for their coat of arms for my collection; . . . and then, in our own country, thank God, the nobility still means something — it is the mainstay of the throne, the support of the faith — what do I care for Switzerland?"

"I beg of you, Coriolan, do not lose your temper," said the Countess Adele soothingly, "and don't talk so loud. What were we just speaking about? Oh, yes, that Helmer . . . I wonder if it is the same man?"

Malhof signified with a nod that he was: "He has become a famous poet and has been a frequent visitor at the Garlett palace."

"So-o-!" exclaimed the countess. "That is cer-

tainly not safe. The young man was in love with Franka. That is the reason Eduard dismissed him. And he has become so famous since?"

"It certainly does not take much to make a person famous nowadays," remarked Coriolan. "No longer are there any more classical poets. And as to fame — that is something that belongs only to great men, great field-marshals and statesmen. Prince Eugene, Wallenstein, Metternich, the Archduke Karl, Radetzky — those are names haloed with glory. No such are to be found in this list."

"Don't you count great poets also?" asked Malhof.

"Well, the classics, as far as I am concerned — Goethe and Schiller."

"With the best will in the world, Mr. Toker could not invite them. But who knows whether there may not be a future Schiller or Goethe among the guests?"

Coriolan shrugged his shoulders disdainfully. "In this wretched age of ours there are no more great men — either poets or heroes. All these suspicious elements, this Socialism and Freemasonry must be cleaned out once and for all. Authority must be set up again and the people must have religion. Perhaps it will be better after the next war — such a steel bath is mighty wholesome . . ."

"Can't you leave off discussing politics, cousin?" sighed the countess. "Fortunately, nothing is said now about war."

"Do you think so? This proves that you read nothing in the newspapers except gossip and the

society news, and not the political part; otherwise you would know that war is coming, and very soon, too. Do you imagine we shall much longer endure the gibes of the mischief-makers on the other side of the Adriatic, and don't you know how in the Balkans they are only waiting their opportunity to found a Great Servia? Austria will come out of a war with such an increase of power that it will be able to settle its internal affairs on a satisfactory basis. And in the rest of Europe? The tension is everywhere so great — who knows but before this so-called Rose-Week shall end, the canister will begin to rattle somewhere?"

"There, now! that will do," cried the old countess. "You are a horrible bird of evil omen! It is n't true, is it, Malhof, that things are so bad?"

"I am no prophet. I grant that we are standing on volcanic ground, but I believe that it will be a revolution sooner than a war. It must come to a financial crash if things go on as they are — to strikes, general strikes — how do I know? — or to an open revolt. . . . But let us talk of other things. Let us hope that everything will come out all right. *Après nous le déluge!* In the mean time, ladies, I propose that in half an hour we set forth to have a little glimpse of Lucerne. I will immediately order a carriage. First of all, I will take you past the buildings of the Rose-Palace. You must see how fairy-like it all is. Even two years ago, when I was here, it was dazzling in its magnificence. Since then I understand Mr. Toker has introduced still further embellishments and surprises. I have already pro-

cured the entrance cards for the opening exercises this evening. This forenoon we will spend in exploring Lucerne. But Coriolan, you must take an oath that you will not say another word about politics as long as we are on our pleasure trip."

CHAPTER XVII

THE OPENING NIGHT

THE exercises began at half-past seven in the evening; so at that time of the year it was still broad daylight. The public was admitted to the grounds flanked with pillared halls, spreading out from the lake to the palace and covering a wide stretch behind it. Here there was unrestrained freedom of movement. Thus the festival began like a large garden-party.

Mr. Toker, his daughter, and his celebrated guests, recognizable by the rosebud fastened to the breast, circulated among the others. An automatic orchestrion, consisting of instruments like the organ and the harmonium, played by electricity, and concealed behind trees, filled the place with delicate harmonies, ringing like the music of the spheres. The fountains played, and in their lofty columns of water glittered fiery red the rays of the sinking sun. In the air flying-machines like birds or dragon-flies performed artistic evolutions. Suddenly arose a balloon with an aëronaut costumed like the god Mars: from the basket two big guns were pointed threateningly toward the earth. This uncanny instrument of war rose to a great height, followed by the eyes and the shouts of the spectators. Some shouts of disapprobation mingled with the others, for there were many in the throng who felt disturbed by being reminded of the terrors of battles in the

midst of a peaceful festival. It is true, men have been accustomed to the military maneuvers attracting eager crowds to watch them, and at the world expositions the military pavilion has always proved to be a great drawing-card. But here, at this festival of human exaltation, — celebrated under the symbol of the queen of flowers, — they were really not prepared for the sight of cannon. But the slight dissatisfaction soon resolved into pleasure, when from the mouth of the threatening guns, instead of shells, fresh rose-leaves were discharged over the throng, and on their descent to the earth fluttered about in the air like butterflies. There was universal applause. Even a great cannon-founder who was among the spectators, and who had recently signed very advantageous contracts with several governments for the delivery of balloon guns and of vertical cannon, clapped his hands with the rest. One must be ready to understand a joke; . . . the successful cannon-king scarcely suspected with what deep seriousness Mr. Toker prepared all the graceful details of his work.

The little coterie of Austrian travelers were among those present. But as both of the old ladies were too weary to wander about, they took seats in one of the marquees which had been pitched in the grounds. Coriolan stayed with them, but Malhof went out to mingle with the promenaders. He had hardly taken two steps ere he fell in with Franka, who happened to be going in the direction of the marquee where her relatives were sitting. Malhof stopped in front of her: —

"Your very humble servant, Fräulein Garlett. Do you remember me?"

Franka offered him her hand. "Certainly, Baron Malhof. It is a pleasure to meet with a fellow-countryman."

"Pray do not hasten on. You have no idea who is sitting in the next marquee . . . you must not meet them without being forewarned . . ."

"Who is it?"

"That I must prepare your mind for by slow degrees. Let us walk for a few moments in the opposite direction and talk about old times. May I offer you my arm?"

Franka accepted. "You are really comical, Baron Malhof. Old times! We can scarcely be said to share youthful recollections. . . . We have met just twice, and the first time certainly under rather painful circumstances. The second time at Sielenburg was more agreeable."

"Well, now it must be agreeable, too. What a change has taken place in your fate, Fräulein Franka! First, a poor deserted orphan; next, one of the wealthiest heiresses in the country; and now, in addition, a European reputation! And as beautiful as ever . . . yet your features have changed . . . there is something melancholy in your face. Are you happy?"

"Forever that question! Must one be happy?"

"Yes, one must if circumstances permit it, as in your case they do — rather, demand it. Or are you cast down by an unhappy love-affair?"

Franka laughed. "No, I am not in love with any one."

"Well, that is certainly a misfortune. Your laugh did not ring merrily. I can easily imagine that a hundred opportunities were open to you, and perhaps for that very reason you do not want to marry, and you are not so far from wrong. . . . Freedom is a fine thing. But have you no lover?"

"Truly, Baron Malhof, you are . . ."

"Oh, do not scold me! On the reef of your virtue all the accumulated wisdom of my life goes to shipwreck. But this time I am preaching unselfishly, and the text of my sermon is: Do not let your youth pass in vain; don't cheat your heart and your temperament of their rights. You did not come into the world, blest with beauty, wealth, and independence, to waste all these treasures, and bluestocking yourself merely for women's rights' *tournées* like any ugly old maid. You must live, Fräulein Garlett—live!"

Franka stopped walking and withdrew her arm: "You are incorrigible. This is in the style of that letter of yours . . . but I am not making a show of insulted virtue, it is insulted independence. What I do, and what I leave undone, is not your affair. You cannot look into my soul; you cannot know what I understand by living."

Baron Malhof put on a contrite expression: "I have been at fault again, I see. I was trying to give good advice and I get a lesson. Forgive me!"

Franka took his arm again: "Now, tell me, please, what mischief lurks in the tent, from the neighborhood of which you have led me."

"How good of you to be genial again! In the tent sit your two aunts and Cousin Coriolan."

Certainly no joyful surprise showed itself in Franka's face. "Aunt Adele and Aunt Albertine? How did they happen to come here?"

"To tell the honest truth, I persuaded them to take the journey. You will forgive me for that, too?"

"I will go this minute and greet my aunts."

Franka made the best of a bad business. It was really disagreeable to her to meet again those three, especially here in this place, where a spirit prevailed which could not fail to be incomprehensible to them; . . . however, when all was said, they were her people. Her people? What a false expression. How little she belonged to them. "To whom do I belong, I'd like to know?" Franka asked herself and a chill crept around her heart. . . .

"Really, then, you are willing to be precipitated head over heels into the inevitable? That is true courage!"

A few minutes later the two entered the marquee. The meeting was rather stiff and constrained. Their paths had gone so far asunder! And, moreover, they had never been so very congenial. There was an exchange of greetings, but no heartiness could be felt or feigned; then they talked indifferently of the journey, of the festival week, and the like. Countess Adele invited Franka to sit down with them.

"Tell us how things are going with you and what you are doing. Do you speak this evening?"

"No," replied Franka, as she took a seat beside her aunts. "I do not give my address until to-morrow."

"And do you not feel alarmed? It is incomprehensible to me what you are doing. . . . Tell me, is the Helmer who is here, the one . . ."

Franka anticipated the question: "Yes, grandpapa's former secretary. He has grown to be a world-famous poet."

"I should never have believed it of him," remarked Albertine.

"And I should never have believed that you, my respected aunts, would ever dream of such a thing as making a journey to the Rose-Festival. I really believe you were never out of Austria. Did you come in an airship?"

"That would be the last thing!" cried Countess Adele with horror. "I would never go in such a machine as long as I lived. . . . What has become of your companion?"

"Frau von Rockhaus? Oh, she is still with me."

"That is good. One must always have a regard to appearances."

Malhof sighed. "Oh, appearances! Besides, they are all out of style."

After a while Franka got up. "Well, I must be going. . . . We shall meet again in the hall. The speeches will soon begin."

"Really," said Coriolan, "I am quite curious to see this wild show."

A little later a fanfare gave the signal that the festival was to be formally opened in the theater-hall. Thither flocked all the visitors scattered throughout the grounds.

It was an immense hall with boxes and galleries.

Yet the parquet was not, as in regular theaters, filled with rows of seats placed regularly, but was like a great salon, in which a multitude of sofas and armchairs were distributed about at haphazard, separated by screens and flowering plants, with rooms enough for people to pass from one group to another. Behind the boxes were wide lobbies, available for that part of the public that did not care to listen to any particular address, either because its subject was not interesting or because it was delivered in a language not understood. There was no curtain hung in front of the stage, which was really not a stage, but rather a podium or platform. This podium formed a second smaller salon with steps leading down into the parquet. There, on the upper level, were grouped Mr. Toker and all his illustrious guests, sitting and standing. In front was a small reading-desk with a chair.

Throughout the hall there was much to make it evident that here also was the realm of roses. The upholstery of the furniture and the fronts of the boxes were of pink velvet, and by an electric apparatus a pale rose glow was everywhere disseminated. A hidden ventilator provided the place with cool, rose-perfumed air. No chandelier was suspended from above, but the ceiling simulated the sky populated with electric lights, distributed like stars and nebulæ, — an accurate copy of a segment of the universe. Between the first row of boxes and the gallery was placed a wreath of medallion-portraits of great departed poets, savants, inventors, and discoverers from Vergil to Shakespeare and to Goethe;

from Aristotle to Leonardo da Vinci, and then to Darwin; from Columbus to Gutenberg and to Montgolfier. Under the pictures the names sparkled with electric letters. In the center a little structure which, from the hall looked like a prompter's box, concealed a phonograph apparatus to make a permanent record of the speaker's words.

A signal rang out; Toker stepped to the front of the platform, and soon expectant silence prevailed in the hall. In a loud voice, but in simple, conversational manner and in English Toker began to speak: —

"Ladies and gentlemen! A hearty welcome to you all. I see in the hall many of the habitués of the Lucerne Rose-Weeks, yet also many new faces. To the new visitors I should like to tell in a few words the purpose of our establishment: It is a centralization of forces, a great dynamo-machine. For what is offered to you here in this limited place is meant for the millions outside, and is to be carried to the greatest distances, to be distributed among the working-people, and to be brought before the mightiest rulers. A number of the noblest spirits among our contemporaries are working together here. Each one brings a significant portion of the results of his thinking, his poetry, his investigations, of his creations; and all with the same aim, with the same end in view: — the progress of society toward greater righteousness and greater freedom, toward greater beauty and greater happiness. It is already recognized that what lifts men from barbarism to humanity is the work of growing intelligence, which awak-

ens the will toward goodness. This will animates us here. And therefore I beg you to listen to the coming addresses not only with friendly attention, but also with some reverence. Wherever men assemble for the purpose of elevating their thoughts into high regions, and of allowing their hearts to beat in good will for their fellow-creatures, there is a kind of temple. I now will allow Music to speak."

Toker bowed and stepped back. Now followed the performance of the Rose-Quintette, directed by the composer, the gifted young Pole, himself. After it was finished, not only the Russian countess, but the whole assemblage broke out into a delirium of enthusiasm. "There," exclaimed Countess Vera to Rinotti, who sat near her, "is n't that as much a triumph as a victorious battle?"

"It is a battle, and the victor is named Melody," replied the marchese.

Next, the great French author went to the desk and read a chapter from his last (as yet unprinted) book. It was entitled "La Vérité, toute la Vérité, rien que la Vérité." Full of bold thought, of keen wit, of sparkling turns of speech, it was a bundle of new truths delivered to the auditors, and at the same time it was an unmasking of the lies that subjugate human society. This reading was followed by an intermission devoted to social intercourse, while the two circles, the audience and the performers, mingled together.

Prince Victor Adolph mounted the steps leading to the platform and approached Franka: "Shall we not hear you to-day, Miss Garlett?"

"No, Your Highness; my turn comes to-morrow — but I am already beginning to feel anxious."

"You feel anxious! Yet you are accustomed to speak before crowded houses."

"But not before hundreds of thousands of people. This fearful machine" — she indicated the phonograph in the prompter's box — "will carry our words before that number."

"Whether a thousand or a hundred thousand — is n't it all the same?"

"Oh, no, the thousand, who come of their own free will to listen to an address, belong to a certain stratum of society, and are all animated by similar feelings. My public, for example, was mostly composed of young girls from middle-class circles, and had the desire to attain intellectual freedom and to put it into practice; but the public which I shall face to-morrow . . ."

"Yes, I know. Mr. Toker has told us — it embraces all ranks in all lands. Even in this hall, there is not much unanimity of sentiment. Look, for example, at the difference between my views and the views of my companion, Count Orell . . ."

"I must thank you for the splendid violets, Prince."

"Oh, only a modest greeting."

The prince remained a long time near Franka, engaging her in lively conversation. That attracted the attention of the two aunts and their friends.

"Well, it looks as if Franka had a very zealous suitor: who may it be?"

Malhof happened to be able to inform them.

"Indeed?" exclaimed Tante Adele thoughtfully. "A prince from the ruling house! That is dangerous. He certainly could n't marry her."

Malhof shrugged his shoulders. "As if marriage must always be in the wind! I am curious to know whether the sermons preached up there for the welfare of humanity will not be directed also against the oppressive chains of marriage."

"Nothing is sacred to you!" sighed the countess. "Besides, as you never were married, you cannot judge of marriage."

"For the very reason that I have judged, I remained single."

Coriolan sat with a terribly bored expression. He understood so little French that all the points of the reading he had heard had wholly escaped him; finally he had given up all attempt to listen. In his heart he was already repenting that he had ever taken this journey. The whole thing displeased him. . . . At the Apollo Theater it is more amusing . . . there one understands everything . . . and then this Rose-Masquerade . . .

"You look very savage, Coriolan!" remarked the Countess Adele; "you do not say a word."

"I say, stay at home and entertain yourself sensibly."

The young composer was now sitting next the Russian widow.

"The piece was heavenly . . . perfectly splendid . . . it must be a delight to be able to compose such things." Her eyes rested warmly on the young musician.

"Every artistic creation carries with it a good bit of agony, most gracious Countess."

"What gives others so much delight ought not to cause its creator any pain."

"And yet, do you not always hear the sighs that tremble through so many pieces of music? These the artist must have drawn out of his own soul. But not only that — he must have not only experienced anguish in order to reproduce it in tones — creation itself is accompanied by pain; yearning, trouble, despondency . . . the crushing sense of the inexpressible . . ."

"You must explain all this to me more definitely. Please come to-morrow and have a cup of tea — at five o'clock . . . Grand Hôtel . . . say yes . . . will you promise?"

Helmer, informed by Franka of the presence of the Sielenburg party, entered the hall and sought out the little Austrian group. Bowing, he went up to them: "May I be permitted . . . in memory of old times. . . . I do not know whether you will remember me."

The countess nodded: "To be sure, Herr Helmer . . . you have made a great career . . . famous poet . . . that is no small thing! Who would ever have predicted it? You will give us your book to read, won't you? And tell me, is this Mr. Toker not a very extravagant man?"

"He is certainly by no means an ordinary man."

"Do you imply by that," asked Coriolan sharply, "that we are ordinary people?"

"I meant nothing more than I said. Mr. Toker

is an exceptional phenomenon. A man, who by work and business has made an enormous fortune, and who now is placing this fortune at the service of the most ideal aims."

Coriolan shrugged his shoulders. "He simply wants to get himself talked about."

"What ideal aims do you mean?" asked the countess.

"Heavens! it is hard to explain them all in a few words. The main thing is the spread of thoughts that soar—*Hochgedanken* . . ."

"What is that?"

"If you will do me the honor of listening to my address, then you will understand Mr. Toker's intentions, for I am going to speak in the spirit which lies at the foundation of the motto of this year's Rose-Festival."

"Are you going to speak to-day?"

"No; not until the third or fourth day."

"It is good that you do not speak this evening," remarked Fräulein Albertine, joining in the conversation. "I must tell you frankly that your voice seems to me somewhat hoarse . . . perhaps you have a cold; it seems to me, too, that your nose is swollen . . . you ought to rub on a little candle tallow."

Helmer smiled. "I am afraid I should not be able to find a tallow candle in the whole Rose-Palace. But now I will bid you good-evening . . . a new lecture is beginning."

The young Russian author now stepped forward to the reader's deak with a manuscript in his hand. At the same time ushers went through the hall,

distributing printed pamphlets containing German, French, and English translations of what the author was to deliver in his native tongue. That portion of the public which did not understand Russian — and that was by far the larger — could now also follow the speaker and enjoy his euphonious utterance, now trembling with melancholy, now glowing with inspiration. What he offered, were brief sketches in prose: scenes from the time of war and of revolution, personal experiences or episodes, made vivid by poetic intuition; stories of the wolf's pits, stories of barbed-wire fences, stories of shells filled with poison, by the fumes of which people were asphyxiated slowly and agonizingly; stories of women beaten by Cossack-*nagaïkas;* of tortures practiced in dungeons; of *pogroms*, of executions, of massacring and of incendiary bands; of the woe in the hearts of young Russians of all classes, from the humblest of the people to the highest in court circles, who had suffered awfully under this terrorism, because their hearts and souls are open to the most progressive ideas of freedom and mildness; of the sorrows of the poets and the scientists, of the enlightened politicians and the simple man of the people, whose natural benevolence is opposed to all these cruelties, perpetrated by the demon Violence, because the minds of the masses are subject to the illusion that violence is the only means of resisting evil.

The poet added an epilogue to his little histories:—

"What I have related is sad, profoundly sad. Should I have refrained from doing this in this *cénacle?* Our host has provided this festival week

under the protection and shelter of Beauty — Beauty is the sister of Joy, not of Woe . . . and I have brought before you so much woe. . . . I have unveiled so much that is unspeakably hateful! But it has not been a mistake; indeed, I know the goal that beckons to the founder of this Rose-Congress. Lofty thoughts are to fly forth into the world; lofty feelings must be aroused. And this object subserves a still most distant object: namely, that it should be a bit better, a bit brighter in this world of ours. To this end one must see clearly, must look straight at the reality. One must know all that is going on, everywhere. All the cries of complaint and all the shrieks of anguish must be heard as they are torn from tormented human beings by human unreason. Then flames up that lofty feeling — one of the noblest of all: — *Pity!* And thereby is the will strengthened — lofty will it may be called — to substitute for the infamous system of reciprocal persecution the sublime rule of reciprocal helpfulness."

A gloomy mood had taken possession of the audience, yet with it was mingled also something of that reverential emotion by which Toker wanted to see his public stirred. Then followed a short interlude of music, and that in its turn was followed by a small ballet of quite unique kind. Arc-lamps were the instruments and variegated flames were the dancers. It seemed like a *divertissement* from fairyland, and yet it was only an experiment from the realm of chemistry.

This brought to a conclusion the exercises of the first evening, and social intercourse again assumed control.

CHAPTER XVIII

FRANKA'S LECTURE

WHEN Franka woke the following morning, she was possessed by the consciousness that all sorts of unpleasantnesses were weighing upon her. . . . What could it mean? Oh, yes, that evening, she had to give her address. Never, except the first time, had she felt such a panic at the prospect of a public appearance as she felt now. Always, before, she had realized that she was making her addresses as the exponent of a cause, as a guide for those of her own sex who were searching their way — a way of escape; her own person was, so to speak, eliminated. But this time it seemed to her as if she, Franka Garlett, were going to make her début before the assembled world, which would pass judgment as to whether she were capable of coöperating with all the celebrities of Europe and America in Toker's great work of civilization. There would be in the hall no band of enthusiastic young girls, but the majority of the audience would be men who would either take no interest in the tasks of the new woman, or would even be opposed to them.

The second unpleasant thing that weighed on her spirit was the presence of her aunts and their two escorts, Coriolan and Malhof. To speak before them was really painful, and it would seem to her as if these four were her real audience. And then

there was Prince Victor Adolph, who would hear her. . . . Why had she any timidity before him? Why that wish to please him, that terror of displeasing him? . . . Is a person worthy of addressing the whole world as the interpreter of "lofty thoughts," when the question arises, What will that young man think?

Accustomed to speak extempore, she had made no written digest of her address; but now she felt that in these quite altered circumstances her inspiration might desert her, and she resolved to write a draft. She looked at the clock: it was still early, only seven. No matter, she must have time to write. She rang for her maid, made a hurried morning toilette, and had her writing-apparatus, together with her breakfast, brought out on the balcony.

It was a wonderfully fresh morning, full of bird songs and spicy fragrance. Franka's room looked out on a small group of firs, and she regarded it as a real blessing that here nothing was to be seen of the everlasting roses, and no breath of the everlasting perfume of roses. Just that day the whole rose-scheme for the time-being seemed distasteful to her, for it was responsible for her making her appearance as a member of the Rose-Order and perhaps lamentably failing. . . .

She drew in long breaths of the forest-air and a half-yearning, half-regretful thought stole over her: "Why am I not in my quiet Moravian hunting-castle, which lies so deep hidden in the fir forest?" How beautiful it would be there, how restful, how lonely . . . loneliness? No, that was not, after all,

what she was pining for . . . some one must be with her . . . who? Victor Adolph? No, he was a stranger. It must be some trusty friend, some one on whose heart — a heart containing no depths hidden from her — she might lean; at the same time, some one to whom she would be the dearest object on earth. . . . The image of her father rose in her soul. . . . "Oh, yes, thou, thou! But thou art dead."

She drew a deep sigh and went into her room to fetch out the precious notebook. She would hold a little colloquy with her father. She came back to the balcony with the book in her hand, sat down at the table where her tablet and pencil were ready for her, and instead of writing, she began to turn the pages of the notebook and to read. The first sentence that attracted her attention was: —

"The absent grow daily more and more distant!" (Japanese proverb.)

Franka looked up to the sky. "Ah, yes, my poor departed father! Death is an eternal absence — how sadly true that is. I love thee still — I see thee, but how far, how far away!"

She read on: —

Saüme nicht dich zu erdreisten,	Do not hesitate to be full of daring,
Wenn die Menge zaudernd schweift;	When the crowd irresolute drifts;
Alles kann der Edle leisten,	All things can the noble accomplish
Der versteht und rasch ergreift.	Who perceives and quickly acts.

(Goethe, *Faust*, 2d part, Act 1. "Chor der Geister.")

Franka remembered how at this stanza her father had remarked: "Do you see in how few words the poet sums up the characteristics that make a man a leader and accomplisher? He must be bold and confident and noble; he must have intellect and resolution."

Von Halbheit halte den Pfad rein,	Of mediocrity keep thy road clear;
Der ganze Mann setzt ganze Tat ein	Let the whole man bear the whole load clear
Und wahre Ehre muss ohne Naht sein.	And pure honor must be of all seam sewed clear.
(Ernst Ziel.)	

"The whole man bear the whole load clear," repeated Franka. "The whole woman, too, — this equalization in dignity Brother Chlodwig taught me."

> All men's advantage every man's rule.
> Banish him far away — our age's demon far hence,
> The sleepy, lame monster, whose name is Indifference.

I believe it is the secret of eminent men that they preserve into advancing life their childish feelings, — that is to say, warm, deep feelings. This terrible world cools down all ardor into nauseous lukewarmness. But eminent men have so much internal warmth that an ocean of stupidity and unintelligence could never cool what is burning in their hearts. They have an absolute lack of affinity for everything common and ordinary; they enter into no combination with it.

"There didst thou describe thy dear self, my own father. . . . I never saw in my life such a childlike person as thou wert . . . except Helmer, when he laughs . . . he also can laugh like a child. . . ."

Wenn auch nur Einer lebt,	If only one man lives
Der nicht sich beugt	Who will not fail
Und für die Wahrheit zeugt —	And makes the truth prevail —
Wie das erhebt!	What joy that gives!
Wenn auch nur Einer still	If only one man press
Die Hand uns drückt	Silent our hands,
Und mit uns denkt und will,	What happiness
Wie das beglückt!	To know he understands!

(Hermann Lingg.)

For a long while Franka remained buried in the perusal of the old notebook. At last, she put herself to making an outline of her coming address. She wrote down a few notes, but could not seem to warm up to the work, and she accepted as a welcome diversion the arrival of the morning mail. As usual, she received a great number of letters and documents. Dr. Fixstern regularly sent her reports regarding the condition of the property entrusted to him. The directors of the Garlett Academy kept her informed of the progress of this flourishing institution. Enthusiastic letters from young girls came every day, and there were numerous requests for autographs. On this morning there was in addition the offer of an impresario who wanted her to undertake a lecture *tournée* through the United States; not to speak of a declaration of love from a silent admirer present at the Rose-Week's exercises and moved to send her a few lyric effusions. This time her whole mail made a particularly arid impression on Franka. It seemed to her so lifeless and soulless. But now her duty was to proceed with writing down the lecture — it was already eleven o'clock. She pushed the half-written page into position before

her. . . . No, she could not master her thoughts. . . . She needed advice, needed warm, living words. She got up and pressed the electric button. "Please," she said to the servant who answered her summons, "see if Mr. Helmer is in, and if he is, I should like to have him come to see me."

After a moment the servant came back: "Mr. Helmer has just this moment come."

"Very good, ask him into the salon."

She stepped into the adjoining room. Helmer was standing before the center table, contemplating the great basket of violets on which was still attached Prince Victor Adolph's visiting-card.

Franka offered him her hand: "It was good of you to come . . ."

"Since you have summoned me . . ."

"Oh. Do not be so ceremonious. . . . I wanted to see Brother Chlodwig. . . . I need your encouragement, your advice . . ."

He seemed ill at ease. "My advice? Perhaps in regard to this business," and he indicated the violets.

"What business? Oh, indeed, you think . . . no, no, listen. . . . I will tell you what I want."

Just at that moment Frau Eleonore entered by the other door. "Do I disturb you"?

"Frankly, yes. I wanted to talk over my lecture with Mr. Helmer."

"Very well; then I will write some letters"; and she vanished again into her own room.

"So now you know what it is about. . . . I am simply in despair about my lecture. You must help me, just as at the first time. You showed me the

way and made it smooth, and here this day I am standing again on a crossway, or rather before a wall. . . . Help me over, reach me your hand!"

The demand was only meant symbolically, but Helmer took her hand in his, and she got a degree of calm, of consolation from the firm grasp.

"What is the matter, Franka?" he asked tenderly. "What has come over you suddenly? Timidity? . . . You, the victorious, you, 'the Garlett'?"

"Dear me, it is hard to explain. Timidity? Yes, and such a sense of emptiness, such a lack of impulse. When, before, I have spoken to my audiences of women, I have had something to say to them. . . . I wanted to persuade them, I wanted to transfer to their souls what filled my own soul to the brim. My addresses were a means, not an end. . . . But here: I cannot feel the impulse to persuade all these people, — beginning with Mr. Toker and his guests, — and all these princes and diplomats and my aunts and Coriolan (why did n't they stay at home?) — to persuade them, I say, that the young girls of our day must assume new duties. . . . And I shall stand there on the platform, in order to perform — hateful term! — in order to show the inquisitive company whether I have sufficient ability to be accepted as one of the Rose-Knights, whether I really deserved to be invited by Mr. Toker. These people are not at all here to get edification, but they come as critics; and I am here, not as one urging, but as an artist, and I am not that. For if the inner impulse fails, then I can't speak . . . and that is the reason why I am unhappy. . . ."

Chlodwig pressed her hand still more firmly. "I understand you, Franka. But oh, your lips are actually trembling, like a child's when it wants to cry. Do not be faint-hearted; there will be a way out of this difficulty. If it is really only what you have just told me, then it is easy enough to help you. Or, perhaps, is it a fit of strained nerves? Possibly the work that you have chosen does not satisfy you any longer; — perhaps the emptiness which you complain of is the emptiness of your heart, a conscious or an unconscious yearning; — or is it that you are tired of these roses here, and," with a glance at the basket, "are longing for more violets?"

Franka shook her head vigorously. "Leave the violets out of the question. I have told you the honest truth, why I dread this evening so much."

"Well, then, we shall meet that difficulty. Let me think."

He leaned his elbow on the table and supported his head with his hand. Franka looked up to him — expectantly and trustfully. The thoughtful expression of his face touched and moved her: he was employing his faculties for her. He wanted to help her. Ah, after the verb "to love," "to help" is the most beautiful verb in the world!

After a while he began to speak, looking her full in the eye: "The public, whose criticism and lack of sympathy thou fearest — forgive me for using the familiar 'du' . . . I drifted back to the time when I wrote you those letters as your brother in the spirit — this public must vanish, must really vanish

out of your consciousness. You must put it out of existence yourself with your own introductory words. There must be the feeling that it really is not there, this public — that therefore it has no right to criticize you. You are not speaking to it — it can only listen, while you are speaking to a hundred thousand others. Aye, to millions, perhaps; . . . it is your best opportunity — that must inspire you and fire you. Up till now you have been following a fine, brilliant career; to-day you will set the crown to it. Begin your address with the words: 'You young girls, now listen to me'; and then continue in some such way as this: 'Forgive me, ladies and gentlemen! I know very well that in this distinguished assembly assuredly there will be only a small percentage of young girls, and therefore my words will arouse only a feeble echo in this room. But here I stand because I have undertaken to deliver a message — a message to young people of my own sex showing them the way which — as I believe — will lead the girls themselves and at the same time all human society to higher aims. And to-day in this hall, the windows of which look out into the wide world, the opportunity is vouchsafed me to be heard by invisible throngs of those to whom my life-work is dedicated, and therefore it is a sacred duty to direct my utterances only to these and to call out more loudly and joyfully than ever before: "Ye young maidens, listen to me!" ' After this exordium, Franka, the whole audience of those that disturb you will vanish out of your consciousness, and you can repeat to the invisible listeners all the things

with which at your first appearance you took all maiden hearts by storm."

Franka sprang up and reached Helmer both her hands. "Thanks, Brother Chlodwig, that is, indeed, a saving way out. You are and always will be my dear master!"

Some one knocked at the door. Franka let go Helmer's hands and cried: "Come in."

Once more it was an offering of flowers and once more the prince's visiting-card was attached to the bouquet. A shade of vexation passed over Helmer's face. He felt a twofold annoyance: in the first place, at this importunate homage, and in the second place, because he was annoyed . . . was it jealousy?

"I will leave you now. You must collect your thoughts, and you need rest, Franka."

"Good-bye, then, for now. I thank you again."

"Shall you wear these violets this evening?"

"I always wear violets."

"If you marry this prince, Franka, then it is all up with your career."

"What are you thinking about? The prince in his position cannot marry any one of humble rank; he is not imagining such a thing."

"What is he imagining, then?"

"I don't know you, Helmer. Hitherto you have never interfered with my private affairs."

"Forgive my presumption. I shan't do so any more." He turned to go.

"Are you angry, Brother Chlodwig?"

"Yes — with myself." And he hastened out.

Franka gazed after him and smiled.

CHAPTER XIX

YE YOUNG MAIDENS, LISTEN TO ME

THE exercises on this second evening of the Rose-Week began as before with music. But it was a kind of music such as had never before, or anywhere else, been heard. A feeling of wonder, and unprecedented delight took possession of the audience — a delight which almost reached awe. It was a newly invented instrument, the tone of which had no resemblance to that of any other instrument. It was more nearly comparable to bell-tones, like cathedral chimes, loud and grave and vibrating.

In the midst of a crescendo the player of it suddenly ceased playing and said to the public: —

"What you are here listening to is the voice of a magician — the magician 'Electricity.' The instrument, as you see, is not large, and its mechanism is concealed; I invented it and constructed it. In honor of the Mæcenas who enabled me to accomplish my invention, I have christened it the 'Toker Organ.' It is played by any artist who understands the organ, but its tone and its *timbre* are the product of a nature-force tamed. The surprising thing is that the tone has such a sweetness that it can awake the keenest musical delight, and that its attainable power has no limits. The crescendo which I just now broke off can be made ever so many times more

tremendous on this 'Toker Organ.' A shut-off has to be introduced here, for otherwise the strength of the tone-waves would increase so that it might not only burst your ear-drums but even the ceiling of the hall. Yet, in open space, on a mountain-top or from a lighthouse in the open sea, one might with impunity fill a circumference of miles with music. And because you are now assured that the sweet tone, however powerful it may be, remains sweet and tender, and will never become a deafening noise, I will once more swell to a hitherto unknown majesty of power, but certainly not to be unendurable, as the shut-off is introduced a long way before that point; — I will continue my playing. I choose an old song known to you all, the text of which seems appropriate to this festival week: 'The Last Rose of Summer.'"

These words, spoken in English, — the young inventor was an American engineer of the Edison school, — were repeated in French and German by interpreters. Then the young man again seated himself at the instrument, allowing the resounding bells to give out the melancholy melody, ever fuller and fuller, so that it seemed to the listeners as if the whole hall were filled with the vibrating waves of sound. When the crescendo grew four or five times as loud as it was when the player had broken off the first time, voices were heard here and there in the hall as if crying in anguish: "Enough, enough!" The artist nodded and instituted immediately a diminuendo, and gradually the melody, just as it had mounted, so now it decreased to the most

thread-like pianissimo, dying away as if in the remotest distance.

Stormy applause now broke loose. Something never before known had been experienced, life was enriched by a new sensation. Then followed the social intermission. Many mounted the platform to examine the instrument. A buzz of conversation filled the hall. Impressions regarding the marvelous music were exchanged. A composer told his delight that music had achieved now a new means of expression of such inimitable beauty. An officer of the general staff remarked that, in the infinite possibilities of overwhelming noise, there might be something of strategic importance. A passionate lover of nature cried, "Well, I must say: now that the sublime emptiness of heavenly space is to be darkened with every kind of whirring aviating rabble, the splendid silence of the mountains and the seas will be desecrated by electrically bellowed street-songs." On the other hand, a philosopher remarked thoughtfully: "Boundless powers put into the hand of man — what prospects open up!"

Coriolan expressed his views to his cousins: "Did n't I tell you so? Tingel-tangel, klingel-klangel. . . . Variété. . . . And the next number is the appearance of Franka Garlett, who is still, unfortunately, our kinswoman. Where is she hiding? She is not to be seen anywhere."

Franka was in fact not present in the hall. All day long she had denied herself to every one, so that she might devote her time uninterruptedly to the preparation of her address. She had not even gone

to the hall at the beginning of the exercises, but had asked to be called only when it was her turn to speak.

The moment had now arrived. She stepped out on the platform.

A murmur of admiration swept through the hall. She looked classically beautiful in her trailing pure white gown with its long, winglike sleeves, with no other adornment than a pearl necklace and the usual small bouquet of violets at the heart-shaped opening of her bodice. Her face was pallid in contrast to the black diadem of her tresses, coiled high on her head. As she stepped forward, loud applause broke out. She acknowledged it, without smiling, with a graceful inclination and began: —

"Ye young maidens, listen to me!" Just as Helmer had suggested, she delivered her proem and then repeated the argument of her first speech in which she took as her text the injunction: "We are here to share in man's thought," added to Goethe's "We are here to share in men's love."

"Since she had thus spoken," she added, "the domain had widened out ever more and more, — the domain which woman had conquered for herself inch by inch, — and the time was rapidly approaching when young womanhood was also to share in man's work, even in his political work. Now the important question was not as formerly to win positions for themselves, but it was important for them to make themselves capable and worthy of filling the places waiting for them. In many countries — Australia, Finland, Norway, and other lands — the

doors of Parliament have been thrown open to women as electors and elected; probably little by little the other countries would follow. Probably, also, women — if once they entered deliberative bodies — would be entrusted with official positions, and the ministries would not remain closed to them. In short, equal rights and equal positions would be theirs along the whole line: simply a terrible state of things, unless we have sufficient imagination to conceive of simultaneously altered forms of society and a more highly developed community. The great distrust and displeasure, ordinarily felt against any proposed change in conditions, are derived from the fact that the environing conditions are supposed to be unchanged, and a harsh dissonance is experienced, just such an one as a discordant tone must give in a well-tuned instrument.

"Only one example: a woman as an executioner — what a horrid picture. Restrain your emotion — if ever woman finds her place among the lawgivers of the land, capital punishment will surely be abolished.

"Do you fully realize what is the gist of this question? Whether our sex shall share in the direction of institutions and events is not merely a question of the improvement of women's lot, but it is also that of the improvement of man's lot. All the virtues which are entrusted to our charge, and which are supposed to be superfluous in public affairs, wholly conducted from the masculine side, — mildness, gentleness, moderation, purity, the power to endure without complaining, and to love with

utter devotion, — all these virtues we must carry intact into the new circles of activity. Before all, however, we must strive to possess them, indeed; those virtues in a large measure are only ascribed to us in poems.

"But that is not sufficient. If women are to enjoy equal rights with men in deliberation and action, then they must also appropriate those characteristics that are generally regarded as exclusively masculine virtues: courage, steadfastness, energy, resolution, logical thought. On the other hand, they must beware (thinking thus to legitimate their claim to equal rights) of adopting those failings which are regarded as masculine prerogatives: habits of drinking and brawling, brutality, harshness, intemperance. If the emancipation of women develops in this direction, as its opponents at the outset generally believed to be its tendency, then it would be no blessing — it would be a curse. But this will not happen. For humanity develops upward. And the coöperation of both sexes in all callings will have as consequences that each will adopt the virtues characteristic of the other and will drop the faults and vices hitherto regarded as special privileges, so that they themselves and the practice of their callings will be thereby ennobled. Then there will not be mannish girls and coarse, manlike women, and no effeminate men, but complete human beings of both sexes, standing on a loftier plane!"

Here Franka was interrupted by applause. As she stood there in her thoroughly gracious womanliness, in her absolutely feminine dignity, at the

same time performing her great mission with such unshaken conviction, she seemed, indeed, to be the personification of that ideal — of combined tenderness and strength — which she had conjured up before the audience.

She continued speaking for some time longer. She depicted what had been gained in positive social advantage by the participation of women in the social duties of the present day, now that this movement was really on the fair road to accomplishment. The battle against one of the worst foes of humanity — alcoholism — had resulted in its greatest victories in countries where women exercise an influence on the making of laws. The war against another of the shameful blots on our civilization — the sexual slavery of women; this is also to be eradicated only where pure and blameless women have the courage to look the infamous evil in the face, to call it by name, and to lead the revolt against it. Dueling and war are two functions in which the feminine sex are forbidden to take part, because they stand in absolute opposition to all those qualities and feelings that characterize the feminine half of mankind. If now this half should gain their due influence in the conduct of public life, then those two deadly modes of settling disputes would no longer remain legitimate. "The mission of woman, thus conceived, is anticipated and poetically symbolized by the sovereign figure of the Madonna trampling a dragon under her dainty foot."

Here the speaker paused for a moment. On many

sides there was applause. Yet many refrained from expressing approbation, because they felt offended by Franka's words — what did she mean by dragon? Could she mean militarism? Or the whole masculine sex? Would she like to see petticoat government established? Remarks were heard: "What idiots these feminists are!" "And she is so pretty; she certainly would not need to take up such fads!"

On the other hand, those in the audience who did not understand German were captivated by her appearance and entranced by her melodious voice. They followed the occasional gestures with which she emphasized certain phrases, and they kept their eyes fixed on her calm, white hands with their long, tapering fingers and their rosy, gleaming nails. Her tone of queenly calmness, now and again vibrating with restrained feeling, exercised on all the same charm, whether they understood her spoken word or not; and the very ones who could not understand applauded most unrestrainedly, because they detected nothing in her speech to disturb their convictions. Even De la Rochère clapped vigorously, as he assuredly would not have done if he had known what she had been pleading for: in his eyes there was nothing more ridiculous, nothing more baneful, than the object aimed at in the Feminist Movement. In his eyes "woman" was "une créature d'amour," and this sentimentally uttered epithet was, as he believed, the highest compliment that could be given to a woman. Prince Victor Adolph found an artistic satisfaction in listening to Franka's

address. For the cause itself, he had little sympathy — it did not appeal to him.

In the Sielenburg group a painful emotion was stirred. Coriolan gave utterance to an inarticulate grunt of disapprobation; the Countess Adele sighed; Fräulein Albertine raised her eyes beseechingly to heaven; only Baron Malhof cried, with sincere warmth: "Ah, she is a splendid young creature!"

Franka proceeded: "I have indeed overpassed the limits that I once set for myself as a field of labor. I am not accustomed to plead for the conquest of professions and for attainment of political rights — all that I leave to other champions of the Woman Movement. But if these callings and rights come gradually into the hands of those of my sex, then they must know how to exercise them; they must be educated to the task. Their minds must be open and their interest must be awake to the universality of the problems of civilization: these are all correlated, and for this reason the only duty that I put before my young sisters was this: *Learn how to think!* But to-day, knowing that an echo from this address will be carried to the remotest circles, and therefore also to those women who stand in the van and who have already won such important strategic points, — as, for example, the women in Australia, — I felt myself compelled to drop those restrictions, in order to gaze out over the whole wide field of the Woman Question.

"And, in conclusion, I turn to the men that hear me: We demand nothing of your magnanimity. We do not come as petitioners, but as givers — for the

time being as desirous of giving; for still a portion of mankind, both men and women, reject the gifts we would confer. 'Let things remain as they are!' this fundamental desideratum of the conservative spirit is still cherished by the majority of women. Therefore, even among them there is still a large proportion of those opposed to the Feminist Movement. Among men, on the other hand, it numbers an ever-increasing host of adherents. The admission of collective energy to the work for the elevation and enrichment of human society is a matter of equal concern to both halves. The ideal of that social condition in which brutality is to be driven out, in which gentleness, benevolence, and beauty are to become effective, is, God knows, no exclusively feminine ideal. It has swept before the vision of all the great teachers of mankind; and that is to-day also the guiding star of all those poets, thinkers, and statesmen who are yearning for a new and better day and are laboring to bring it to pass.

"All these welcome the coöperation of women as a reinforcement of their effective forces. The battle against ancient rooted evil, against the dominion of force, is truly not easy, and the men who are conducting it will only rejoice if to their aid come forth coadjutors and assistants from the ranks of that half of mankind whose most distinctive domain lies in those virtues which they are trying to diffuse.

"Aye, this is what the new Eve is to become: a coadjutor recognized as of equal value; and for this purpose must you, my young sisters, educate yourselves, and for this purpose must you, my

noble brethren," — and here she extended one hand toward her auditors, — "help and sustain us."

She bowed and stepped back. John Toker went to meet her and shook her hand. The audience applauded vigorously.

During the social intermission following her address, Franka went down into the hall. She was surrounded, and numerous admirers — both men and, especially, women — asked to be introduced to her. She had the agreeable feeling that she had made a good impression, and this conviction was assured in her mind not so much by the warm reception given her by the public as by the silent glance and pressure of the hand whereby Chlodwig Helmer had expressed his satisfaction on the platform after she had finished.

Baron Malhof now mingled with the group that surrounded her. He offered her his arm: "Come, please. Your aunts are eager to offer you their congratulations."

"Really?" exclaimed Franka, astonished, as she took Malhof's arm and went with him. "I should never have believed it."

At the other end of the hall sat the two old ladies and Coriolan.

"Here I come, bringing the conquering heroine," said Malhof.

Countess Adele moved along on her sofa to give room for Franka. "You surprised me . . . to talk so long at one stretch without stammering and with no paper in your hand . . . that is remarkable.

It is plain that you have had much practice. Are n't you very tired?"

"I am a little used up. . . . I have been dreading all day the ordeal of speaking; — before so many people . . . I mean those out in the wide world . . . and also to a certain degree before you. I realize how little you approve of my speaking and of what I say."

"Well, that is quite true," said Aunt Albertine.

Coriolan wanted for once to be courteous: "Well, I must admit, your voice is very pleasant and you do look very beautiful."

"But you ought to wear gloves," remarked Albertine; "you notice, don't you, that everybody wears gloves?"

Franka smiled. "But have you nothing to say about the subject of my address?"

"If you were to kill me," replied Coriolan, "I could not tell you now what you talked about. I am incapable of following a lecture for five minutes consecutively. . . . I only know that you preached, girls ought to be like men, and men like girls . . . and, truly, that is not to my taste. It would be a fine muddle — but it is the end and aim of all modern movements — the topsy-turvy world! Fortunately, it is not so easily turned topsy-turvy, and whatever you may talk — man remains man, and woman remains woman — and that is as it ought to be."

The old countess came to Franka's aid: "Franka only urged that both ought to be better, and that surely could not do any harm to mankind. But there

is one thing that I should like to blame you for, Franka. If you really want to improve people, why do you not draw their attention to the injunctions of our holy Faith? And if you call attention to the virtues of women, why do you forget the most womanly and most important — piety? As far as I can remember, you did not say one single word about religion."

"I spoke of goodness, of mercy, and of mildness — is not that religion?"

"But, my dear friends," cried Malhof at this juncture, "Miss Garlett is certainly not an officer in the Salvation Army. Moreover, as far as concerns these religious dogmas . . . "

Countess Adele evidently wanted to turn the conversation from this theme, for Malhof's skepticism was well known to her: "Franka, tell me where are you going, when this week is ended? Don't you want to come to the Sielenburg for a while?"

"What am I going to do? I have not the slightest idea; I have an invitation to London, but I am hesitating. If I go back to Austria, then I will make you a visit at the Sielenburg. But now, I will say good-evening. We shall meet again to-morrow."

She had gone only a few steps when Prince Victor Adolph joined her.

"At last I can tell you, my dear young lady, how fascinating — but, no, I will not pay you compliments; but I should like to have a little serious discussion with you on what I heard you say this evening. You were fascinating, that is a fact, but that is not the point. What I want to talk about is

the meaning and the scope of what you put before us. Your idea certainly was not to please, but to attain something definite, was n't it? This is what I should like to ask you about — your purpose. It is not altogether clear to me."

"So you expect me to give you a private lesson on the Woman Question? Very good, you may ask what you desire to know, and I will answer."

"Here is no place for a serious, undisturbed conversation, among all these people fluttering about. Might I do myself the honor of calling on you some afternoon?"

"Certainly, Your Highness."

"Then perhaps to-morrow?"

She nodded: "Yes, to-morrow at three o'clock."

CHAPTER XX

ANOTHER LETTER FROM CHLODWIG HELMER

THAT night Helmer could not sleep. The experiences of the day had deeply agitated him. First, the morning call on Franka. The feeling of panic which she had so confidingly confessed to him, had seemed to transfer itself to him. What if she should suffer discomfiture on that day, when, so to speak, the whole world was directing its eyes on her? That would embitter her whole career, and he felt that he was responsible for her career.

The crises had been successfully passed; Franka had borne herself gallantly and had won a striking success, but this had not lessened his agitation and the success did not seem to him sufficient. It had not shown itself in the eager adherence of enthusiasts, filled with gratitude and devotion, but in the condescending applause of a curious and well-amused theater audience. To him she was a priestess, and to the whole people yonder she was a — diva. Had she not done a priest-like and heroic act? Had she not sacrificed herself in order to offer to the world a part of what appeared to her as truth and wisdom — only to give others, not herself, a little more happiness? For herself, indeed, she had treasures of happiness at her disposal — youth, beauty, wealth, freedom. Everything stood open before her: a life in the great world, with all its enjoyments of luxury

and pleasure, a life of love at the side of a man who worshiped her, the joys of motherhood, . . . and all this she had thrown over in order to devote herself wholly and entirely to the duties and cares of an apostleship . . .

"Oh, my poor Franka, my noble, sweet . . ."

With these words, spoken aloud, he interrupted the course of his thoughts. He was alarmed at the tender expression of his own voice — could it be that he really was in love with her? At this question other considerations occurred to him — circumstances which had mightily affected him in the last few days: the offering of the violets . . . and then, after the address, just as he was about to go down into the hall to speak with Franka, there stood the prince again at her side. . . . It had caused a flaming agony to dart through his heart. . . . So he was jealous, was he? It was not to be denied — he loved her!

And even as he confessed the soft impeachment, he realized it as a heavy load of trouble, but at the same time so delightful, that not for the world would he have been willing to get rid of it. And was it really a new love; was it not rather one long kindled, which for years had been smouldering and had now burst into flame? Was not possibly this old sentiment the reason why in all these years, in spite of many more or less transient love-affairs, he had never been able to let his heart go completely? As a dramatic poet he had enjoyed many opportunities of frequenting the theater behind the scenes and many an adventure had come in his way. One of them was an affair which lasted two years. But it had not brought

ease to his heart; rather it had become a burden. Fortunately it had been broken off gradually and without pain on either side. For some time he had been quite free, and was able to say that he had never been under the spell of a genuine passion. Always this or that quality had not quite satisfied him in those by whom he was attracted; always he had discovered that they lacked something; and the secret of it was, that he compared them all with Franka Garlett; not one of them came up to that ideal.

The following morning a letter was brought to Franka. She was sitting again on her balcony and looking out over the forest. Her first thought was, that the missive came from Victor Adolph, but a glance at the handwriting dispelled this assumption — the letter was from Helmer. She tore open the envelope and read: —

Two o'clock in the morning. It is in vain — I cannot sleep. Racing pulse and whirling thoughts deprive me of all possibility of rest. Now it occurs to me that I have the prescriptive right to address a letter at rare intervals to a sister-soul with whom I may commune most intimately.

I am making use of this right and I have sat down at my desk. It stands by the open window and bright moonlight is streaming into the room. Only this sheet of paper is illuminated by my shaded lamp — the rest of the room is all bathed in soft, silvery blue. I had put on my clothes to take a stroll in the garden and to cool my fever in the moon-enchanted night air. But I can put before you something of the overflow of my thoughts. You yourself are the center of these thoughts. What has so disturbed me is the experience that I went through to-day on account of you and because of you. And in this emotion

so much was revealed to my consciousness concerning you and myself . . . but I am going to write you here only of what concerns you, what touches your life. I leave myself out of the question. It would be very enticing now, when I am coming to you for refuge in this moment of restlessness and loneliness, to make you the confidante of my trouble, — for I have that, — but it is my own secret.

Now let me speak of you and your address. I had no opportunity of talking with you about it. You disappeared in the hall; first you were surrounded by the Sielenburg people and then you were accosted by the prince. Shortly afterwards you retired, evidently exhausted by your triumph. For it was a triumph in spite of the panic which tormented you in the morning. You spoke with sovereign assurance, and said all that was to be said. Indeed, you went beyond your accustomed domain, — the education of women for an intellectual participation in the questions of the day; you entered the domain of actual feminism — for you pleaded for practical coöperation of women in government and lawmaking. But such general and abstract considerations do little toward the attainment of this end. The gradual conquest of the whole will be accomplished only by practical workers in details, doing practical things, here one and there one, thousands of them in thousands of different places. And this development is already in full swing, though it still lags far behind the ideal which you have foreseen.

Yet, what am I driving at? Here I am speaking also of generalities which do not interest me at this moment. What interests me now is yourself, is your life. My conscience reproaches me that when you gave me all your confidence, as to a brother in the spirit, I pointed out to you this path where you are entirely forgetting yourself. I was the one who suggested the word "Renunciation" as the countersign of that path.

Yet I recall that I added: this full devotion to the cause would be demanded only for a few years. These years are

now past. Your duty, as far as you could fulfill it, is fulfilled. With generous hands you have scattered the seed of great ideas into the world of women. You have called into existence the Garlett Academy, and lavished a large part of your fortune on it — it is working on in your spirit. The congregation of the "Frankistinnen" has been formed and is spreading. It is no longer necessary for you to throw your whole self into the work of the propaganda; it will go forward henceforth automatically. Let your address of to-day be the last of your public addresses.

It will find an echo in a thousand places — it will be perpetuated in the "Rose Annals" — it makes a brilliant finale. Laboriously and courageously and persistently, you have put your shoulder to the wheel to set it in motion; — now it is in full motion . . . what is the use of pushing it any more? Time will bring you other work; but there is no reason for you to go out and seek work — you must think of living, you must think of your own still fresh, joy-deserving life. You are here also "to share in loving," Franka. And now I come back to Prince Victor Adolph. I believe he worships you. He is no ordinary man. I have trustworthy information as to his worthiness. Do not do violence to your heart if it beats for him.

Having reached this point, Franka dropped the sheet into her lap — she had not expected this. The first words of the letter, "racing pulse and whirling thoughts," thoughts which complemented her picture — she would sooner have been prepared for his appealing to her heart for himself and not for another. Well, it was better so. In this way her "*Brother Chlodwig*" was not lost to her.

She had no idea what it had cost him. At the very place where she ceased reading, he had ceased writing. He had sprung to his feet, and, clasping his head in both hands, had groaned aloud. He paced several

times up and down the room in his excitement. Then he leaned out of the window and gazed toward the horizon which already betrayed a pallid premonition of the early dawn. The moon was veiled in passing clouds and one or two stars were twinkling. "One may not yearn to grasp the stars!" Have I not often repeated this to myself? He was vexed with himself. This jealous emotion seemed to him senseless, unworthy. He must and would crush it down, and the very best way before him was to help Franka to incline to the prince. And so he went on writing: —

I really believe that an alliance with this royal prince might make you happy in several directions: first through merely loving — that crown of life — why should you not make it yours? And secondly, if the opportunity is given you, to work for your, for our, ideals (and in this word "our" I include also the spirit of your father). Only think what might be accomplished in this important, influential position. How the young prince would be strengthened and inspired by you in his bold, independent ideas. There is certainly no genuine happiness on earth for the like of us, unless we continue to work for the great objects which our longing eyes have beheld. We cannot, as long as we live, cease our efforts. In the midst of every other kind of happiness this work remains our chief desire, as it is our consolation in every misfortune. In my own trouble — I confessed to you that I have trouble — I am still with the half of my soul — the better half of my soul — at my task. You have already fulfilled your task for the Rose-Week Festival. Before me is still my reading in the presence of the whole world. I am not — like Franka Garlett — used to public speaking; my tool is the pen. So I look forward to this ordeal not without trembling, yet not without pleasure. It is a splendid opportu-

nity to pour out what fills the soul to overflowing. I burn to be heard and understood. Not because I flatter myself that I have something beautiful to say, but something that may bring help. But how to find the right words?

The things that float before my mind are so dazzling and so new, while the words that one has at one's disposal are so banal and so flat. The sublimest concepts, like goodness, freedom, right, have become dimmed by so many editorials, committee speeches, and election proclamations, that they have lost all their brilliancy — what is worse, all their value. The lofty thoughts mined from the new time lie in bars, like gold, but in order to bring them into circulation, one must first coin them into new words, while we have only thin and worn coins to pass. If we come to the modern man — I mean a man with broad philosophical and æsthetic views — with these morality-dripping words (a morality which has been amply preached but never practiced in all these thousands of years), then it moves him like the admonition, "Be a good little boy," spoken to a grown-up man.

It is beginning to dawn — this is no metaphor: you know the old fault of my style of letter-writing, but this time I have really had no other meaning — it is beginning to grow light. In order to scare away the torment of sleepless night hours, I have written till morning. In the foliage-crowned trees awakens the twittering of birds. What is it that they have to say to one another every day at waking and every evening before they compose themselves to sleep?

Now I am going to shut my window, pull down the Venetian blinds, and try to get a little rest. It has refreshed me writing to you. Perhaps I may have a nap — perhaps even a dream. . . .

CHLODWIG.

Franka and Helmer sat together as usual at luncheon. Franka had come in a little late.

"Well," said she, as she took her place, "did you have your dream?"

"Yes, I dreamed about you. I saw you standing on the platform again and . . ."

"And it was to be for the last time, was it?" interrupted Franka. "You wrote me, did n't you, because it would be easier than to say to me, by word of mouth, during breakfast: 'Miss Garlett, you spoke very indifferently. You are no longer accomplishing your work — retire!'"

"Oh," exclaimed Chlodwig, pained, "did you understand me *so?*"

"The principal thing I understood was that you were in a very melancholy and excited frame of mind and came to me for comfort: that delights me. And one thing more — you desire my happiness. But do you really think it beckons in the direction you suppose? Two or three bunches of violets are hardly to be regarded as an offer of marriage. Up to the present time, I have not the slightest ground for supposing that Prince Victor Adolph has ever thought of such a thing."

"He has not intimated to you that he is in love with you?" This question was in a jubilant tone.

"No, and if he should do so, do you know what . . . what I . . . well, I confess, I am not quite certain myself. . . . Perhaps it would have been better if you had not suggested such a thing . . . you have kindled a spark in my heart."

Their dialogue, carried on in an undertone, was interrupted by Mr. Toker, who from the other side of the table engaged Franka in conversation.

After the luncheon was finished and the company had drifted into the adjoining salons, Gwendoline took Franka's arm.

"Oh, Miss Garlett," said she in a voice trembling with emotion, "I must thank you. You have no idea what an impression you made on me, you fill me with admiration . . ."

Franka made the courteous deprecatory sign with her head with which we are accustomed to receive flattering phrases.

"No, no, no!" cried the young American girl vehemently, "I should not be so presumptuous, stupid thing that I am, to pay you mere compliments. I wanted just to tell you what feelings you awakened in me . . . not merely agreeable feelings — for it is certainly not agreeable to be made ashamed of one's self, when one has hard things to say to one's own face; as, for example: 'You are certainly an empty-headed creature, Gwen! You must decidedly improve, my girl, if you want to rise again in my estimation' . . ."

"And why did you speak so disrespectfully to Miss Toker?"

"Oh, you understand me perfectly. You know right well, when you address young girls, that hitherto very, very few among them have ever thought with you. I belong to the majority. I have always kept aloof from serious things; for instance, I have not the slightest remembrance what that clever Frenchman said yesterday — my attention was wholly diverted to the various groups in the hall, for I had discovered several comical people.

When you began to speak, I was interested in the way the folds of your gown fell — there was something Greek about it. Who knows, whether I should have listened to your words at all, if you had not suddenly addressed your speech directly to young girls. Then I had to listen to what you had to say to me, and after that I did not lose another word. I did not understand it all, nor can I remember it all, but so much I know — I should like to be your pupil. Do teach me to think, show me my place in the world, so that I may accomplish something, be of some use. . . . You see, papa has always treated me as a child, and I have never been interested in his plans: I never thought that there was anything in them for us young people . . ."

"Oh," cried Franka, "it is precisely the young and the youngest who are called and who are capable of walking in new paths. For that reason we all (I mean, we whose aspirations are directed to the future) look with such hope to America, for there the whole land is so young . . ."

"And we Americans look so timidly and admiringly up to Europe, because it is old and venerable. All we have, we have from you."

"And you are going to repay us richly for that. For what is going to ameliorate our future, — inventions, wealth, free institutions, peace, — all that you will carry over to us. Mr. Toker is a messenger of that kind."

"Oh, my dear father . . . I fear I do not know him as I should."

Gwendoline went on to explain that she had never

lived very much in her father's society. In her childhood, she had been almost entirely in her grandmother's hands, as her mother had died when she was born; and then, when six years ago the grandmother died, the child, then eleven, was entrusted to a Swiss *Pensionat*, from which only the year before she had returned to her own country. In this excellent *Pensionat* she had received the usual education of young ladies — that is to say, to take a part rather in dancing than in thinking. She had got only one idea there of the Woman Movement — that it was a far from elegant aberration of high-strung females. What Franka had said about it was a revelation to her. Now she felt she must and would accomplish something — Miss Garlett must instruct and advise her further.

Franka now felt obliged to tear herself away from this interview. She was expecting a caller. She kissed the eager young disciple, whose attitude toward her filled her with joyous pride. "To-morrow we will talk further about this, my dear girl; I must go now."

She summoned Frau von Rockhaus and went with her to her rooms. Shortly afterwards Prince Victor Adolph was announced. Franka went forward to greet him. Frau Eleonore, who was sitting near the window, stood up and curtseyed, but immediately resumed her seat, for the call did not concern her.

Franka's heart began to beat more quickly. "Helmer is to blame for this," said she to herself with vexation.

After the first interchange of greetings and after they had sat down the prince said: —

"Permit me to enter *in medias res* without delay, and ask you the questions which I have on my mind."

He did not speak loud. Frau von Rockhaus, who from her remote corner was visible *de profil perdu*, could not hear what was said.

"Well, I am ready to listen," said Franka, and raised her eyes to her visitor.

Once more she realized that she had never seen a handsomer and more elegant man than this young prince. Yet, in his attitude there was a certain haughty, peculiarly unbending reserve — more noticeable if possible than ever. It was as if something had annoyed him.

"I heard you yesterday for the second time, Miss Garlett. You spoke as eloquently as you did the first time, perhaps even more so; but you crossed over into another field where I could not well follow you."

"How so? I still treat the same question."

"But from a different standpoint. When I heard you in Germany, you protested that you were not going to stand for the current aims of feminism — the franchise, candidacy for all public offices, and the like; that sort of thing you would leave to others. You would only urge that women should cultivate their intellect sufficiently to interest themselves in political and social life, so that by their influence they might be capable of imparting something of feminine virtues into the conduct of political and

social affairs . . . that is what I understood you to say."

"You understood quite correctly, Your Highness."

"And suddenly yesterday you began to join in all the extreme demands of the Women's Rights party, — female voters, female members of Parliament — how can I tell to what extent they would go . . . no . . . there I am opposed. Perhaps I am reactionary, but I shudder at the mere thought of seeing women — delicate, lovely women — dragged about in the dusty battle-field."

"Do you mean Parliaments? Parliaments need not be dusty and need not be battle-fields, but places for work."

"Why yes, you expect that all will be changed. But that is the very thing I dread. There is so much that is fine, it would be a pity to change it — in other words, to destroy it. As, for example, suppose one were to cultivate nothing but vegetables instead of flowers. Of course, it would be more useful. And the captivating types of women who are to be found in our present state of civilization — to see them all disappear — that would be, indeed, deplorable. And must every woman have a calling? Wife, mother, sweetheart — are not those also callings?"

"There is no need of excluding others — just like husband, father, lover!"

"They are not to be compared. Oh, it has often been lamented that the world is robbed of its gods — I tremble at the thought that it may be robbed

of its feminine elements. I question whether this whole movement for equality — because it is contrary to nature — is not to be regarded as a temporary aberration, now and again doing harm and destined to disappear. Please give me your ideas about this."

Franka interrupted him with an impatient movement of her hand. The trend of the conversation affected her unpleasantly. "Excuse me, Your Highness, I cannot give you a second lecture! I should not convert you, for your objection does not rest on grounds of reason, but is rather instinctive and therefore especially vehement. Nor have I the wish to convert you. My specialty, as you yourself have remarked, is certainly not that of the militant feminist. It is remarkable, what an effect my yesterday's address has produced: it moved a good friend to advise me to give up the whole thing — while it made the brilliant daughter of the house my enthusiastic disciple; and it entirely revolted you, Your Highness."

Victor Adolph started: "Good Heavens, how can you use such a word — revolt! Your address enchanted me, as your whole being enchants me, but the theme — yes, you are quite right — aroused an instinctive antipathy. And it would have been pleasant to me if you had been willing to explain your meaning, yet this expectation was presumptuous. Do not be angry with me."

He rose and took his leave. Franka did not attempt to detain him.

CHAPTER XXI

NEW WONDERS

THE programme of that evening began with an aviation festival over the lake. A surprise had been prepared: the first trial of a new method of flight. The invention had been worked out and tested privately under John Toker's patronage; this day it was to be exhibited before the world.

The festival began at six o'clock. The weather was marvelously fine. A cloudless blue sky, the temperature, seasonable for June, was warm, but agreeably moderated by a cool breeze which ruffled the surface of the lake. On the shores a fleet of boats was arrayed with streamers and flowers, and provided with rugs and soft pillows. On the opposite side lay a number of passenger vessels, the decks of which had been hired for spectators. The population of Lucerne stood in dense throngs along the lake. Excitement and anticipation stirred through the crowd. The spectacle of aeroplanes and flying machines had, indeed, already by this time lost its heart-thrilling fascination. It was no longer as in 1909 and 1910, when the sight of these pioneers of the upper air seemed to take one's very breath away, when they still seemed to be both dream and miracle. The device had now become extremely common everywhere: in many places airships were making regular trips, aeroplanes had been adopted

widely as vehicles of sport and luxury, just as automobiles had several years before, and every nation possessed its little air-fleet. No one longer uttered the exclamation, "Ah!" when a flyer shot up into the air — the marvel had become a commonplace — was simply taken for granted.

But on this occasion, expectation had been once more keyed to the highest pitch. It was known that when Toker promised a surprise, something sensational was going to be produced, something that was not only magnificent and unprecedented, but also of vital significance and calculated to give contemporary society an uplift into new regions.

A programme had been issued for the aviation festival. At six o'clock commencement of evolutions in the air over the lake; at seven o'clock: a surprise announced by three cannon shots.

More than half an hour before the specified hour, the boats, the vessels, the wharves, and also the windows and balconies of the villas and the hotels facing the lake were packed. At the stroke of six, the Toker flotilla of flying-machines ascended and began to perform their evolutions.

"Those aeroplanes are masked and costumed," cried one of the spectators, and that exactly expressed it. These air-vehicles had the shape of all kinds of historical and imaginary equipages. The primitive type of superposed and juxtaposed frames without sides was no longer affected. The wonderful things swept slowly, one behind the other, at a comparatively low elevation, circling about the lake, as far as it was peopled with spectators.

Now the throng really uttered its "Ah!" for such graceful vessels had never before been seen in the air. Slender ships with inflated sails, Roman chariots, Venetian gondolas, Lohengrin swans, enormous shells glittering in mother of pearl and the like, were occupied by aviators, appropriately costumed. The planes and apparatus used for propulsion and steering were concealed with plenty of white and gray material, which looked like clouds, giving a magically picturesque effect. A manufacturer of flying-machines, present among the spectators, shrugged his shoulders and remarked to a bystander: "Child's play with masquerade!"

Several hundred metres high in the air above the heads of the spectators circled a great airship of the Zeppelin type. That, according to the rumor, was to be the bearer of the surprise.

Franka sat in one of the boats with her companion and several other of Toker's house-guests. General conversation was going on, and Franka, leaning back on her cushion, gave herself up to her thoughts. A peculiar melancholy weighed on her spirit — a feeling of isolation. A few hours previous there had been awaiting her something which she had looked forward to with keen anticipation, something which promised to give her a powerful emotion: — the visit of Prince Victor Adolph. Helmer had been responsible for this expectation. The words in his letter were, "He worships you"; he must have known it, else he would not have written so authoritatively, and those three words had gone through her like an electric shock. And what had the visit

brought her? A bit of ill humor, nothing else. Not only the man did not worship her; he did not even understand her; her activities and her views were alien if not repulsive to him. Fortunately, she was not in love with him as yet, but only on the point of being. Consciously she had felt: It has not come as yet, but it is coming, it is coming. . . . She had heard it knocking at her door and had said, "Come in!" — but across the doorsill entered — nothing.

At this moment a mortar shot rang out. All looked up into the air. The Zeppelin began to descend in great spirals; now it was about fifty metres high. The basket and its passengers could be distinctly seen. Three or four persons were sitting in it and two forms were standing close to the rail. Another shot: the rail was thrown open. For Heaven's sake — the two forms might fall out. And sure enough — for just here the third shot was heard, and the two swung off over the edge. A cry rose from all throats. The two figures as they fell stretched out their arms and with a quick motion unfolded a great pair of wings. It was a young man and a young girl. The youth wore striped tricot which gave his body the aspect of a butterfly's form and the two wings were shaped like a butterfly's. The maiden was enveloped in a white flowing robe which came down below her feet; her face was framed in blond curls and her wings were white and long like those frequently depicted as adorning the shoulders of the guardian of Paradise, the Archangel Michael, or those of the angel of the Annunciation.

Butterfly and angel floated down in an oblique, gently gliding flight. The throng was now breathless and dumb. In the center of the lake was stationed a large float; it was supposed that the daring flyers would land on it, but before they reached it, they turned up from a height of five or six metres, and, mounting, flew horizontally, came back, then flew down, and mounted again, performing aerial evolutions, crossing above the fantastic aeroplanes, and then returned to the Zeppelin which once more received them.

A tumultuous uproar of applause rang through the air. An immense feeling of happiness and victory stirred all hearts. So now the air was actually made subservient to mankind. Without an engine, independent as a bird, one could rise from the ground, glide through the air, rise and sink away, be conscious of the motion; it was, indeed, an intoxicating gain!

The address given that evening in the theater auditorium of the Rose-Palace concerned the new acquisition. The inventor, a hitherto unknown young English engineer, gave an exposition of the mechanism of his artificial wings, and related how for some years in all secrecy, under Mr. Toker's auspices, he had been carrying on his investigations, labors, and experiments until at last he had been able to make a gift of his accomplished work to his fellow-men.

After the inventor had concluded his address, Toker himself stepped forward and announced that

no other addresses would be given that evening, but that the respected public might enjoy the consciousness that henceforth no one would any longer need to envy the birds.

The auditorium was now transformed into a social assembly-room where the liveliest conversation was carried on. The topic of applicable pinions truly gave sufficient material for all sorts of interesting variations. Some rejoiced, others bewailed, still others tried to perpetrate witticisms; all were full of astonishment; exclamations flew about in merry confusion.

"I shall be mighty grateful when market-women, instead of swallows and doves, shall be seen flying round in the air with their baskets."

"In place of the light-horse regiment we shall now have regiments of light birds."

"The joy of such self-constituted flight must be supermundane in the true sense of the word."

"The world grows richer, more beautiful, more wonderful every day."

"We will rather say: more unpleasant, more weird."

"Where are the days when people were satisfied to travel on two feet or at most with four or eight horses' feet? Now we must have roller-skates, skis, bicycles, motors, balloons, aeroplanes, and here at last duplex-elliptic back-action folding wings."

"Women will no longer turn into hyenas, but rather into wild geese."

"Do you long for constancy still, my dear madam? now, when we are all become fly-away?"

Franka had retired early to her own rooms. She felt quite unstrung and hungry for solitude. Prince Victor Adolph had not put in an appearance either on the water or in the hall. Was he avoiding her? This was the first time that he had missed any of the exercises. His absence troubled Franka, and she drew disagreeable conclusions from it. Her conclusions, however, were baseless. The absence of the prince was not in any way connected with Franka. That afternoon, a near relative had arrived at Lucerne, to stay only a few hours, and the prince had been obliged to spend the time with him. The two had watched the wonderful flights from the balcony of their hotel.

Franka was glad that Frau Eleonore had not joined her in coming upstairs but had remained below in the hall. Her companion, who had been with her now for some years, was dear and sympathetic to her, but she had never admitted her to a real heart intimacy. Spiritually, also, the woman had never been to her what is called a "resource"; she lacked the "uplift." A cheerful, harmless, honest mind, a lady to her finger-tips, not given to narrow judgments, but also lacking in a bold outlook, she had every quality of a model companion; but she was far from being the ideal of an intimate friend such as Franka really needed. And, therefore, in hours when she was in any way depressed, when an indefinite yearning came over her, when she meditated on God and the world and herself, she always preferred to be alone rather than have Frau Eleonore with her.

She stepped out on the balcony and leaned against the railing. It was a warm night; the air was heavy as if a storm were threatening. Along the horizon frequent sheet-lightning flashed against a background of intensely black clouds; above, the sky was clear and the stars were shining brilliantly. The fir grove which bordered the garden stood dark with the white sand-strewn paths meandering through the trees. A gentle rustling could be heard in the branches. A screech-owl lamented somewhere in the distance, and from the near-by pool came the subdued call of a toad at long intervals; it was assuredly a lonely creature which, sighing again and again, queried: "Is there no other toad near me?" Everywhere — loneliness! That was the mood that drifted down upon Franka from this nature — perhaps because she invested nature with this very mood. Yonder, each flash of lightning zigzagged down for itself alone, unconcerned about its forerunners and successors; in obtuse egoism sparkles every star without caring that, many millions of miles away, other stars are pursuing their own courses; the tree-tops must rock as the wind bends them without other trees coming to their aid — yes, the most perfect indifference reigns wherever she might turn; were she to die that moment, the lightning would continue to flash this way and that; the toad would not call in the least degree more mournfully and the stars in all eternity would not have the slightest notion of it. Alone . . . alone . . . that was the keynote of the whole concert of dread and melancholy which whispered around her.

She stretched her arms out toward the vacant night and drew such a deep breath that its expiration was a groan. Then she sat wearily down in a soft, upholstered wicker chair, leaned her head back, and in her lassitude and depression of spirits the consciousness that she was resting did her good physically. But psychically her indefinite longing developed into a hot sense of woe. Her eyes filled with tears. Oh, how good it would be to have some fond heart on which she might pour out her sorrows . . . yet if she had, perhaps she would not have the impulse to weep! For in that case the pain, the dull pain, called "loneliness," would be cured!

She sat there for some time, thinking of no definite person and conscious of no definite trouble; she merely felt sad, in a certain sense platonically sad. Her thoughts were without clear outlines: all that she had experienced — and missed — that day flowed into a hazy picture. Her eyes closed and gradually she began to doze: her indefinite thoughts were confused into a still more indefinite dream.

Again it seemed to be clear day around her. The call of the toad and the rustling of the leaves had ceased. In place of them there seemed to be the light, murmuring plash of the oar. She was sailing in a gondola on the lake and the boatmen were Helmer and Victor Adolph — both in the characteristic garb and attitude of Venetian gondoliers. The slender black boat was surrounded by cloud-borne aviators. Ah, if she could only wing her way up into the upper air in such an airship. The wish

was followed — as so often occurs in dreams — by its instantaneous fulfillment. A hovering cloud-car took her up and bore her away. She wanted to call to the gondoliers, but they had vanished together with the gondola. All around her only clouds were to be seen, rushing onward and changing their shapes like locomotive smoke which one sees streaming by the train windows. Soon her equipage rose above this region of clouds and the sky grew blue over her head. In easy motion it went up — up and down in rhythmical regularity like a swing, but like a swing which at every gyration lifts farther from the earth; then another forward plunge in speediest flight — like a sailboat driven before a wild wind; — nothing more was to be seen of the earth. On the zenith a dazzling orb — is that the sun? How, then, can her eyes endure its brightness? The orb grew ever larger; it was coming nearer . . . for Heaven's sake, how high was she doomed to mount?

A sense of terror darted through Franka's limbs. . . . "Enough! Enough!" she cried and looked everywhere in her vehicle. . . . Where then is the helmsman? No one! she was all alone. "Alone" — that was the anguishing word which just before had been oppressing her heart; but now for the first time she understood it in its most gruesome sense: alone in the universe! What in comparison was all earthly solitude? Ever higher she arose toward the sun-resembling orb; ever wilder became the storm wind . . . whither, whither, into what boundlessness filled with horrors? A paroxysm of anguish and

terror contracted her heart. Then she felt a strong arm flung protectingly around her; one of the gondoliers stood at her side. She could not see his face; only that strong, rescuing arm with its warm clasp filled her dreamy consciousness with a hitherto unknown joy of security. The little airship now glided gently downwards. It was a blissful feeling: the antithesis of loneliness, a lovely sense of safety; a tide of tenderness billowed, literally billowed, around her, for it was to her as if great warm drops fell on her forehead and trickled caressingly over her body. If one might imagine a paroxysm of appeasing — this miracle she experienced in her dream.

But even in a dream the extreme of happiness lasts only a second. The equipage had become entangled in a knot of other airships which precipitated themselves on one another — painfully their fragments fell into her face; a booming salvo of artillery tore the air, and Franka, awakening, found herself sitting on her balcony in a heavy shower of hail, and the storm, which had broken, was raging with lightning and loud peals of thunder. She jumped up to run into her room and at that instant she felt that the bar of the blind, loosened by the wind, had fallen on her chair, and slipped down to her side.

Just then Frau Rockhaus appeared at the balcony door. "Why! Are you here? I should not have thought of looking for you here. How do you happen to be out in all this storm? It has been raining for a long time, and now it is hailing and thundering. You are wet through."

"Yes, dear Eleonore; I merely fell sound asleep."

"Who ever heard of such a thing! Now, get to bed as quickly as you can."

"Yes, I will. Please ring for the maid, and good-night."

As soon as her light was put out and she had composed herself for going to sleep, a vivid recollection of her dream came to her. Again she believed that she felt the strong arm at her side, — it must have been the bar, — and she tried to conjure back that peculiar consciousness of security which, after the terror of the blood-curdling plunge into endless space, had so deeply inspired her. . . . She succeeded in doing so: she could bring back almost the whole dream with all its details, and she felt enriched by a new experience. Can it be, then, that such a heavenly refuge, such a paradise of security can be found?

It was long before she went to sleep again; indeed, she did not care to sleep, for the sweet recollection of the dream, like a slight intoxication of opium, was more refreshing, more tranquilizing than any sleep. Only toward dawn did she fall into a deep, sound slumber.

When she awoke the sun was already high. She felt strengthened and full of joyous life. The melancholy of the evening before had been dispelled. It even caused no diminution of her good spirits, when, in the course of the forenoon, her aunts came to see her.

"Oh, it is lovely of you to visit me . . . please sit down. Now tell me, how do you enjoy being with us? Is n't it all wonderful?"

The old ladies sat down. Then Franka for the first time noticed that their faces expressed a certain solemn sullenness.

"We have come to say good-bye, Franka," said Countess Adele.

"We cannot endure it any longer," added Fräulein Albertine in explanation.

"What, you are going to leave Lucerne, before the Rose-Week is ended?"

The countess nodded. "Yes, we are leaving today. I believe that, if I were to remain longer, I should lose my mind. These flyings up in the air, these uncanny pictures on the sky, all these upsetting performances and declamations . . . No, it is not normal at all, I might almost say not *comme il faut.* We of our class cannot take any pleasure in it. Yesterday evening, at supper, I declared that I was going home. Albertine was agreeable."

"Perfectly agreeable," corroborated Albertine.

"Coriolan was delighted; only Malhof — he was furious — he is going to stay. We do not need him. Coriolan is sufficient protection for our return journey. He is a genuine knight of the good old stamp. . . . Now, tell me about the prince who was paying you such pronounced attention the day before yesterday. . . . Why did he not show himself yesterday? Is the affair at an end?"

"'T is no affair at all," replied Franka testily.

Fräulein Albertine nodded assent: "You are quite right, not to get any such idea into your head. Men of such elevated rank seldom have honest in-

tentions — certainly not with one of the 'emancipated' women."

"Well, I should have liked Franka to make such a match," said the great-aunt soothingly. "Morganatic marriages are frequently contracted. But you will never lack suitors, for you are pretty; and such little escapades as lecturing will be forgiven you, especially as in the mean time you have managed to retain your respectability. . . . But where is Rockhaus?"

"Gone out for a walk."

"And you here alone? That is not correct. You must be very circumspect. What I was going to say apropos of your getting married . . . there is a cousin of mine — not Coriolan — no longer as young as he used to be, a widower, but of very high nobility; that would be worth while. Do you know, with the Sielenburg estates you ought to marry into the aristocracy, so that they would come into the right hands again. You yourself could get an assured position in society and lead a happy life. Certainly, you could never feel lastingly contented among all these Americans and Russians and vagabond people, and wandering round yourself with them. . . . I should wish my brother's grandchild a pleasanter existence: I want to see her respectably settled. . . . Did n't some one knock? It must be Coriolan; he promised to come round here and fetch us. He has only to get the railway tickets for us, . . . I was right . . . it is he. Come in, come right in, Coriolan; Franka will be glad to see you."

Franka was, indeed, glad — but chiefly because

these three inestimable relatives were going to betake themselves away, and she firmly proposed to break off once more the interrupted and patched-up acquaintance. Behind Coriolan followed a servant, who brought the customary great basket of violets.

"From His Royal Highness, Prince Victor Adolph," said he.

A vivid flush mounted to Franka's cheeks. She indicated with her hand that the basket was to be placed on the table. The servant obeyed and left the room.

"Aha!" exclaimed the Countess Adele sagaciously.

"Ei, ei," commented Fräulein Albertine.

Coriolan felt that it was incumbent on him to say something. "When a pretty woman sings or dances or speaks on the stage, then they send her flowers — that 's the way it goes."

"Yes, it has no other significance," said Franka. "Will you not sit down? And are you really going to take the ladies away?"

"Indeed, I am, and with the greatest pleasure. I am more homesick even than they are. Here one gets the blues, or is driven wild with rage."

"But there are such interesting events still coming off," remarked Franka. "An American inventor is going to tell us of the most unheard-of things, things that will quite revolutionize the future."

Coriolan shrugged his shoulders: "There are nothing but unheard-of things here. It would be much better to teach people to go back to the past, to cultivate their historical sense, than to be always

trying to stir up new rubbish. Is the man going to speak to-day?"

"No, Chlodwig Helmer is to speak to-day."

"Well, that does not tempt me. On the Sielenburg he always preserved a discreet silence; only once he broke out and what he said — I don't remember what it was — turned my stomach. I regard him as a radical."

"Eduard was very much attached to him," spoke up the Countess Adele in defense of the former secretary; "he would not have kept a radical so long. . . . But, children, we must be going now. It is lunch-time and there is still much to do about packing."

She stood up. The others followed her example, and they took their leave. It was not a painful parting. Franka drew a breath of relief when the door closed behind her relatives. But the door opened again, and Fräulein Albertine came back with a deep air of mystery.

"Franka," she whispered, "I have restrained myself all the time we were here, because I did not want to offend you; but I consider it my duty to warn you — it is for your best: do not eat too much, and take much exercise, you are beginning to grow stout! There, now I must hasten to overtake the others. Adieu! God bless you!" And she was off.

Franka had to smile: that was so like Albertine. She cast a glance at herself in the pier-glass and turned away not at all alarmed: there was no fault to be found with the elegance of her figure.

Now she hastened to the table where the basket

of flowers was standing and detached the note that she saw gleaming among the violets. What might the prince — one of the gondoliers of her dream — have written to her? Perhaps a declaration of love! She hastily tore open the envelope which bore a small royal coronet in gold. It was no declaration of love, but only a formal apology for having been absent the day before, which he explained "was due to the passage in Berne of an exalted personage." Franka was possibly a little disappointed — but in reality it was better so. The one, on whose strong arm she leaned in her dream, was perhaps the other gondolier.

CHAPTER XXII

CHLODWIG HELMER'S LECTURE: THE CONQUEST OF THE AIR

On the fourth day of the Rose-Week, the auditorium was as usual filled to the last seat. At the right, on the front of the platform, a kind of proscenium-box had been set up, designed for the special guests who had signified their intention of being present, — the King of Italy and the President of the French Republic. Besides these two chief executives, there were several other members of the ruling families of Europe in the hall, but they were mingled with the other auditors. On the stage, the speaker's desk was placed in the center, but pushed somewhat to the rear, and in the background sat as usual Mr. Toker, his daughter, and a number of his distinguished guests. Some of them, however, had preferred to listen to the exercises from the body of the house.

It was still ten minutes before the hour set for the commencement, but the hall was already packed; only the King and the President had not as yet appeared. Lively conversation buzzed through the place. Persons who naturally belonged together sat in little groups: thus, for example, the two widows, Countess Solnikova and Frau Annette Felsen, accompanied by several gentlemen, among them

Marchese Rinotti and Baron de la Rochère, as if they were in their own salon; the Countess Schollendorf, Albertine, Coriolan, and Malhof formed a little Austrian colony, to which the well-known sportsman also joined himself. Franka Garlett with her companion sat in the background of a small box, just out of sight of the public.

Franka's excitement was great. She had never heard Helmer speak in public — it was practically his first public address, and she trembled a little for him.

The Sielenburgers had not taken their departure after all. It had happened that the sleeping-coupé tickets procured were meant for the following day and consequently the involuntarily prolonged sojourn allowed them the opportunity of hearing Helmer's address. The Countess Schollendorf was gazing about through her opera-glass. Suddenly she cried out with a startled expression: "For God's sake, there in the third sofa in front — is n't that the Archduke . . . ?"

"Sh!" interrupted the sportsman. "Don't utter the name aloud; it is certainly he, but he does not want to be recognized."

"Still, perhaps we are mistaken," said the Countess; "our imperial family has not much taste for such American extravagances."

"But really, it *is* the Archduke; I cannot be mistaken, for he bought a horse of me once and closed the bargain himself. Besides, he is said to be a very enlightened prince."

Coriolan flared up: "What do you call 'enlight-

ened'? That is a suspicious word. . . . Thank God, our court is nothing of the sort."

The countess had now directed her glass toward the platform. "Franka is not sitting up there this time . . . but that Helmer! Who would have thought that I should have seen Eduard's secretary in this way again! It is said that he is going to give an address. I am curious."

"I am not," muttered the cousin.

"You are an unendurable man, Coriolan," remarked Albertine suavely.

"We need not be vexed, my worthy friends," observed Baron Malhof at this moment, taking a part in the conversation, after having vainly looked round to find Franka. "One must never be vexed; certainly not while on a pleasure journey. One ought thankfully to get from it all the possible satisfaction that may be offered. Domestic cares, local prejudices, have been left far behind. One drinks in all the delight of the 'now,' of the unfamiliar, of the unusual. And especially here in this festal hall, where such a brilliant company is assembled, where it smells so fragrant, — I would wager that the ventilator distributes atomized rosewater, — where sweet music is playing, where beautiful women are to be seen, and where one can stare at two living rulers of great States, and where there is to be great oratory in various tongues of Babel about the 'lofty flights of human thought.' . . . If this is not a place of amusement, what is it, I 'd like to know? Do you see, in my opinion life is a storehouse, filled full of joyance and annoyance,

and all wisdom consists in getting out of that storehouse all possible joy and avoiding everything that can possibly annoy . . ."

A stir went through the audience. The President of the French Republic and the King of Italy had entered their box. Mr. Toker had ushered them in, and he remained for a few moments standing in the back of the box in order, as could be plainly seen, to give his illustrious guests some information about his likewise illustrious house-guests; for his eyes, as well as those of the two rulers, moved, during the conversation, from one to another of the selected circle filling the background of the platform.

Now Mr. Toker went back to his place and gave the signal to begin.

For the introduction, a second performance was given of the Rose-Quintette which on the first day had afforded such enjoyment; again it exerted the same charm and aroused the whole audience to the utmost enthusiasm. The King from the land of music set the example, and the applause throughout the auditorium rose into a perfect storm. Vera's eyes were filled with tears of delight. The Rose-Quintette was a genuine affront to that ultra-modern school of those who pose as scorners of melody; they did not, indeed, hiss, but they exchanged significant glances and bitterly ironical smiles.

After the applause had subsided, the great Italian tragédienne came forth and recited Hero's lament over the body of Leander, a soul-stirring monologue from the first work of a Roman poet as yet comparatively unknown. It was a decidedly long

while after she had finished, before the applause began: people were too deeply moved to express their gratification instantly. Genuine tears trembled on the eyelashes of the great artist, and in the audience many cheeks were wet. Who has never stood by the bier of one dearly beloved, and has not gazed down into an abyss of grief so profound that the heart is penetrated by the terror of eternity?

Now followed one of those ten-minute pauses during which the auditorium changed into a salon. Some of the guests left their places; calls were paid; there was promenading up and down the lobbies. The master of the house stepped into the box where sat the two exalted rulers in order to explain to them the meaning of the intermission; they in turn went out on the platform and allowed the various celebrities to be presented to them. The King greeted the actress as an old acquaintance, shook hands with her, and talked with her for some time. Then he greeted his other fellow-countryman, the great inventor, with equal heartiness. To be proud of one's king and to feel for him a genuine affection, is a widespread sentiment in monarchical countries; but there is also very frequently in royal personages a feeling of pride and of gratitude for those who as artists or otherwise wear the crown of glory of their country, and this feeling might be called kings' loyalty. For centuries monarchs have showed this loyalty in the form of gratitude to the heads of the great noble families, especially for the leaders of armed forces on land and sea; but of late they have begun to realize that the fame of a country is borne

over wider reaches of space and time by the names of its intellectual great men than by the names of its aristocrats and soldiers.

The ringing of a bell announced the resumption of the exercises, and an expectant silence reigned throughout the hall. John Toker and Chlodwig Helmer stepped out to the speaker's desk. The American began in English: —

"Your Majesty! Mr. President! Ladies and gentlemen! I have the pleasure of introducing to you as the speaker of the evening — I might almost say the speaker of the week — Herr Helmer, of Vienna, the author of the poem 'Schwingen' which quickly became famous. Not that I have any desire to place his deserts higher than those of the other illustrious members of the Rose Order — but because the theme which he is about to treat is the fundamental theme on which our whole plan of action is arranged: the conquest of the upper regions — Herr Helmer, you have the floor."

And he stepped back to his place in the circle. As he took his seat some one whispered to him: "That was not very democratic of you, Mr. Toker, when in your introduction you apostrophized the two rulers with their titles!"

"Please do not confuse democracy with incivility, as is so often done. It is exactly what they are — rulers. To every one his due."

The fault-finder remarked still further: "The two rulers certainly do not understand German and they will be mightily bored with Herr Helmer's address."

"But they do understand German, as I happen to

know. Besides, the French translation of the gist of the address has been printed and is in their hands."

In the mean time Helmer had taken his place at one side of the desk, letting his hand rest on it and surveying the audience. First of all, he looked for Franka. At last he caught sight of her in the corner of her box. He gave her a mute greeting. At that instant Prince Victor Adolph and General Orell entered her box. Franka shook hands with them, but put her finger to her lips, as a sign that they must not speak; then she turned toward the platform. Her heart was beating wildly. She was as deeply agitated as on the evening of her own début. Victor Adolph took his seat behind her.

Helmer made a slight inclination toward the two rulers; then turned to the audience: —

"Fellow-men! The meaning of this address requires an explanation: I am conscious that I am speaking not merely to the small assembly of prominent men and women in this place, but to the world outside. I know that what I am about to say — whether well or ill — will be repeated in type, on human lips, on phonographs, in scientific reviews, in popular assemblies, in the homes of workingmen, in university halls, in all the nooks and corners of the whole civilized world; that it is therefore rightfully addressed to my fellow-men; and what is more: the object itself touches every one personally, no matter to what rank or what land he may belong. Fellow-men, this matter concerns you all alike. *Tua res agitur* — Humanity! One of the greatest hours of your destiny has struck!"

Franka drew a breath of relief. The speaker's voice rang out clear and full, and at the same time a restrained fire could be felt under his words, spoken so calmly and with such assurance. Verily, it was the same fire as had inspired her, when he delivered into her hands the shield and spear — *Hojo-to-ho* — the cry of the Valkyrie!

She turned round to Victor Adolph, who must have understood the mute question in her eyes — "He speaks well, does n't he"? — for he nodded affirmatively.

In a somewhat altered tone Helmer went on: —

"'Alas! corporeal pinions do not so easily correspond to the pinions of the Intellect,' are the words in Goethe's 'Faust.' . . . The opposite is true. Corporeal pinions we already have, but the spiritual wings have not as yet been found to correspond. Obedient to the will of man, the flying ship soars a thousand metres into the air, but the will itself remains in the depths. High and free, in beautiful premeditated curves, the artfully constructed pinions drive through the pure ether, while far below, enchained, remains the intellect groveling in the dust. By a marvel of technique, the gates into a new age have been boldly forced, but nobody seems to perceive this. The marvel is now only a few years old. During the first week or ten days, tumultuous jubilation, universal astonishment: — 'At last the millennial dream comes true!' 'How vast is human genius!' But after a short while everything goes on as before. No trace of the new age. One further means of locomotion, a new article of commerce, a

fresh sport and opportunity for laying wagers, one more childish toy, one weapon more, that is all!

"All respect for so-called human genius, but as far as concerns human imagination — it displays a pitiful feebleness. It ventures a few leaps into the air — a metre or two, like the first flying-machines — models as yet unprovided with motors; but forthwith it sinks back again to the ground. A door into the future forced open: whether from behind it, a golden radiance is to stream, or gloomy clouds are to threaten, people do not see — they have no desire to see. They shrug their shoulders, put on an air of sound common sense, and deny all discussion of future possibilities and revolutions. The matter is left to specialists, and no one any longer takes any interest in it, save as it may affect one's private business or one's private satisfaction.

"Above all, the military authorities always take possession of every new invention and it gets specialized into merely technical limits. Any possibility of its use other than for future wars is not taken into consideration, and hence, the more universal points of view, the indirect consequences, are put aside and only the nearest-lying applications are discussed.

"Shortly before the invention of dirigible airships and flying-machines, armies employed captive balloons and balloons driven before the wind; even then there were aeronautic troops—of course nothing more natural than that these should be entrusted as suitable experts with the introduction and maneuvering of the new air-vehicles. This was regarded in military

circles as nothing revolutionary; it was simply a small improvement which might be made useful in connection with the existent system of tactics — that is to say, for instance, in reconnaissances. As a weapon also, the thing might come into use, and experiments were, indeed, made in this direction; but that was relegated to the dim future and would never attain any great effective significance, for its certainty of aim was of the very slightest, its radius of efficacy very limited, and by means of perpendicular guns the attack might be easily warded off: — such was the style of appeasement with which the suggestion of adding fleets of airships to the other effective forces was set forth and any wider outlook into the possibilities of the new acquisition was not admitted by government circles. Whenever practical necessity demanded such experiments in actual warfare, why, then they might be made, but it was useless to indulge in fanciful dreams of the future. . . . And the specialists continued to occupy themselves with present-day tasks, without abandoning the old ways; — as to the future, let it take care of itself.

"At bottom, indeed, it is not the business of various callings, making use of any new discovery, to investigate it in all its aspects; nay, this would even be too much to expect from the inventors themselves. Does the aviator understand very much about the scope of his invention? Occasionally and exceptionally he does, of course — but not because he is an aviator. As such he is a technician or an acrobat. Or, if he wants to make a show of ideal objects, he

may be a patriot, and offers his apparatus to the ministry of war. He has no inkling of the fact that he has opened the way into a new epoch in which new conditions of life are to produce a new humanity.

"What these new conditions of life may be, many, indeed, of our clear-sighted contemporaries have already recognized, but it has not as yet penetrated into the common consciousness. On this subject I should like to say something to my fellow-men from the far-echoing tribune on which I stand, and especially to tell them about the mighty alternative that has so suddenly been brought before our race."

Chlodwig paused. He seemed to be collecting his thoughts for a moment or two. This interval the public utilized for observations and the exchange of views.

Coriolan muttered: "Some such rubbish as that about flying I remember he put forth when he was at the Sielenburg."

Countess Adele came to the speaker's defense: "He talks right fluently."

"I am curious, indeed," said Prince Victor Adolph to Franka. "Have you any idea what he is aiming at?"

"Certainly, I know Herr Helmer's line of thought. He has been my instructor."

"Your instructor? . . . You have a high opinion of him?"

"Indeed I have."

The group to which the two Russian widows belonged had not been listening very attentively. Annette Felsen and Minister Rinotti were sitting

close together and a scarf falling from Annette's shoulder had arranged itself so conveniently that under its protection their hands could touch. Perhaps this electric contact was too powerful to allow any other to connect the speaker and these two. M. de la Rochère understood not a word of German, and so any criticism that he might be moved to utter concerned only externalities; but it was a favorable criticism: —

"The man has a fine voice and such intelligent hands! Have you noticed how he pressed the ends of his fingers on the top of the table, — as firmly and vibratingly as if he were table-tipping, — while with his other hand he made such eloquent and gracefully sweeping gestures that one might actually follow the drift of his discourse: — he was evidently speaking of the air in which he drew curves as elegant as those of Latham or Blériot."

Helmer now proceeded with his address: —

"The making of fire by artificial means and the invention of speech were the first stages in our progress from animal to man. Articulate man belongs, at all events, to another species than did his dumb ancestor. What kind of a species flying man is to represent, only the scientists of the coming centuries will be able to decide. To-day I would merely call your attention to the conditions of social life, in which we can, even now, predict a change. There is, for example, the whole protective system of society, which might be designated as the 'lateral system,' — for walls, hedges, gratings, shut us off on the sides, — but this now has lost its advantage.

Only the places that are covered with a roof are entirely protected, yet we cannot build roofs over all gardens and all stretches of land. There are no more islands either, if by that term we designate a territory isolated by its coast-defenses and by its fleet. Since the day when Blériot sailed over the British Channel, Great Britain ceased to be an island. Like the concept 'island,' by means of aviation will also disappear the custom-house of the frontier . . . aye, the frontiers themselves.

"Let us pause for a moment and consider that totality of things which bears the name of war: What modification will be likely to ensue in this domain by these new acquisitions? The militarists are quickly ready with their answer: 'War will simply be carried on simultaneously in the air.' But the business is not so simple as on the earth and on the water. All the methods of war, we might say, all the rules of the game, are based on the following hypothesis: the two opponents go forth against each other to the borders, try to cross them, try especially to prevent the enemy from crossing them; try to win and to command positions; to march, if possible, against the capital, and if they succeed, then they dictate terms of peace. In order to make this game more difficult, obstacles are erected in time of peace, forts are built along the borders and the soil is undermined; the farther one penetrates into the country, more and more fortifications are found, which must be captured one after the other by the invading army; and, moreover, every village, every farmstead where the belligerents might

meet, is made into a stronghold. The game can be supported by sea, when the fleets approach the coast, which must be made more difficult to reach by means of fortifications and submarine mines.

"And now comes the third military arm — that of aviation. For this, the crossing of boundaries is child's play. Fortifications would no longer be impediments; not merely that they could be blown up by a couple of pyroxin bombs; — they would be simply a negligible quantity. These artificial constructions, with their trenches and walls and casements, have also ceased to be defenses, just as the islands have ceased to be islands. Headquarters, hitherto the safest places, most protected by distance, places where the maps of the country used to be studied, and serving as the center from which the troops were directed, are now the most exposed; for an enemy's flyer would make it his chief object to fling his explosives down on that particular spot. All the most modern methods of fighting, the concealment behind high-piled earthworks, are henceforth without object; the approach of great army corps offers these air-skirmishers the most favorable circle of trajectory to be imagined — but who will there be to endure this consciousness in addition to all the other hardships of the march? Still more vulnerable to attack from above would be every munition-train.

"The cavalry, which in modern warfare is employed only for recognizances, has become a mere article of luxury through the dirigible balloon, the usefulness of which in the task of spying out the

country has been from the very beginning appreciated as its most brilliant service; but the cavalry, when the regiments ride in close order, would offer a fine mark for the troops of the air. But while all the attempts would be made on the ground with the object of penetrating the hostile country, the aerial troops of both armies would already have flown over both capital cities and would be turning them into smoking heaps of ruins. Likewise, a dirigible could in the dead of night glide over the fleet of twenty-five-thousand-ton ships arrayed in battle order, and annihilate it. High in boundless, unobstructed space there is no definite theater of war, no commanding position; consequently the decision of the campaign cannot be transferred into the air. Aerial machines of murder will not march up side by side in line, but each single one will work from up above downward; up above, there is nothing to conquer and nothing to annihilate.

"If now, under these newly created conditions, nations go forth to fight each other as before, it will be just as if two chessplayers should sit down at the board and should say: 'We will allow the old rules to prevail; the pawn shall be just as valueless; the Knight shall make his jumps; Rook and Queen shall preserve their great power; the King shall have the privilege of "castling"; but we will add a new rule: either of us may throw something on the board from above and upset all the chessmen!' A beautiful game — that would be — which would fail to please the chessplayers!"

He then added, as if in a parenthesis: "The chessmen fail to be pleased anyhow."

Some sounds of dissatisfaction were heard in the auditorium. The military men present were expressing their disagreement. "If only civilians would not talk about things of which they have n't the faintest notion," remarked a retired colonel to his neighbor.

General Orell had demurred the most indignantly: "All nonsense!"

"I don't find it so," replied Victor Adolph.

But no great time was allowed for exchanging opinions, for Helmer now proceeded: —

"The opponents of war — and such I find to-day even in the most influential social positions" — he bowed toward the royal box — "the opponents of war might congratulate themselves that such a war-destroying element has entered into the very apparatus of war; but the chances are that the experiment would bring about a catastrophe involving not the destruction of war, but rather the destruction of civilization.

"In a book, which is the work of a prophet and of a forewarner, H. G. Wells, whose powerful imagination never leaves the solid ground of logic, there is a description of what must become of the present world if once the rain of fire should pour down upon it from out the clouds. Aye, 'the conquest of the air' — we have little cause for rejoicing over it — conceals the most awful perils.

"And one thing more: What will henceforth be the sense of the term 'sentinel'? Hitherto, those that were threatened could feel a certain degree of security, by surrounding themselves with a body-

guard; by keeping all the doors and entrances to their palaces and gardens closely watched, night and day; by stationing armed hedges on the right and left, when they went out into the streets; or, if they traveled, by protecting the railway track through its whole length by lanes of soldiers and police; but what will all this avail against assassination from above?

"And altogether: the execution of every act of hatred or revenge will be greatly facilitated and its discovery made more difficult; no police stations can be erected in the upper air, no police dogs could follow the trail; what yesterday was called 'flight' — then a very difficult and dangerous undertaking — can to-day be taken as a pleasure trip!

"How could one find any traces in the heights above? The aeronautic Sherlock Holmes will offer a new and as yet unexploited subject for detective stories. A winged *gendarmerie* will first have to be organized; but a great obstacle stands in the way of patrolling space: not only is there the stretch from north to south and from east to west, but also zenithward. The desired point will no longer be crossed only by two lines, but by three. All this must be faced. If really man is a wolf to his fellow-man and is bound to remain so, then our enemy, the wolf, by means of our new achievements has got a new and tremendous accretion of strength."

Helmer made a brief pause. A slight feeling of uneasiness had taken possession of his audience. . . . What the man was predicting did not seem so rosy! But Helmer passed his hand over his forehead, as

if he would drive away a swarm of annoying visions, and then he went on in a louder voice: —

"I do not stand here as a prophet of misfortune. I see the evil, but I also see the cure for it. If new conditions of life are brought forward, if the world around us undergoes changes, then our mode of life must be made to conform to them; for what does not conform goes to destruction. Nature herself accomplishes this process of adaptation by dooming to destruction those who are incapable of conforming. At the present stage of human development, however, we do not need to leave this process to Nature alone: we have reason, we have knowledge, and we have experience: we ourselves can take the work of transformation into our own hands! Nature works slowly and works relentlessly; we can hasten her work, and we can avoid those harsh and pitiless means which Nature employs to bend us under the law of adaptation. So now, we are capable of recognizing the new conditions, the new needs, that grow out of the human conquest of the air. We can estimate what of the old contrivances, of the old forms of thinking, cannot be brought over to the new dawning epoch; we can mentally construct the conditions and principles which might prevail in the altered circumstances; we can strive and we can bring it about, that the necessary conformation shall take place without its involving the method of Nature — 'The destruction of whatever resists.'

"And the formula of the needed action is provided for us by the new acquisition itself: We are already able physically to soar up into the heights — we must

do the same thing morally. We must learn to hold dominion over the realm of High Thinking.

"For thousands of years mankind has been dreaming of the possibility of learning to fly. It has so often tried in vain that at last it came to the conclusion that it was impossible. And yet it has been proved to be possible.

"In the same way, and almost even more timidly, mankind has behaved toward those dreams which attributed to human souls the capacity of applying to the intercourse of nations the moral injunctions that have been laid down as law for the behavior of individuals, and of renouncing violence in all its forms. This has been called Utopia. . . . 'Man is essentially a wild beast' — they say: 'only by force can he be tamed, only by force can he be held under restraint, and force has always conducted the fate of nations.' Well, now, the most utopian of all utopian possibilities — flying — has become a reality. Technical art has won this victory. And must the spirit alone remain forever enchained in the wallowing depths of hatred and brutality? Certainly not!

"Just as soon as human genius shall put forth the same determination, the same assurance, as it has put forth in technical work, for the attainment of moral ideals, it will be likewise victorious. All the technical inventions have had the one end and aim of making life more beautiful, more enjoyable, easier, — in a word, of distributing happiness. But what genuine happiness is possible if all intellectual activities are ever maintained for the purpose of rendering life more unendurable and of destroying it?

With his physical capacities, man must grow psychically, else will he become more and more dangerous and wretched instead of growing greater and happier. Now that he has subdued steam and electricity and radium and the Hertzian waves, in order to make existence more comfortable for him, the time has come that he should, with equal confidence and equally firm resolution, try to make serviceable those other forces which also are inherent in the world, — good will, love, reason, — and which alone are fit to endow life with beauty and value."

A murmur of approbation stirred through the hall. Helmer advanced a step toward the front of the platform and stretched out both his hands: —

"Aye, Good Will! I have uttered there the holiest concept in the universe. For the upward flights of the soul, this is the only motor-power — 'Good Will'! If aeronautics and aviation had not discovered the lightest possible motor, they would still have been Utopias. And all endeavors to solve social problems, to bring security and comfort to human society, all attempts to rouse men's souls into higher spheres, have necessarily failed, for the precise reason that Good Will, Goodness — called weakness by the narrow-minded — has not been made the moving power for the conduct of social and political life. Of course, there are still other splendid qualities, and these are universally upheld as the basis of character and as the motives of noble behavior: courage, determination, intellect, enthusiasm, strength. But there is only one criterion for their inward value and outward valuation — they are worthy and blessed only when

they are used in the service of Good Will. The qualities I have named strengthen our activity — they do not ennoble it. There is courage shown in wickedness, determination in cruelty, intellect in malignity, enthusiasm in hatred, and strength in arbitrariness. And in fact, these elicit our admiration, because in the brilliancy of the qualification the abomination of the subject is forgotten.

"I repeat, I am not standing here as a prophet of misfortune; but neither do I stand here as a preacher of virtue. The need is not to educate to goodness, to create and awaken feelings of benevolence; only the goodness which is alive among us men needs to be put into action. There is a field, a vast field embracing almost all social relations, and at its very entrance stands this placard of warning: 'Goodness and Benevolence are forbidden entrance to this field' — the name of which is: 'Politics.'

"This placard, put up by folly and stupidity, must be torn down. There must be room even on this, especially on this, field for humanity's Highest Thinking.

"Some two thousand years ago a great, good, wise spirit put into words a similar High Thought: 'Love one another.' But in vain. And some thousands of years ago an Icarus had attempted to fly up to the sun — but in vain. And yet to-day we can fly. And likewise that other lofty realm is to be won — in which not our bodies but our souls are to soar!

"Woe to us if we delay much longer to make ready for this new conquest. Persecution, slavery,

and destruction must no longer be regarded as legitimate means for the attainment of social and political ends. For the possibilities of annihilation have grown to be too powerful. There is no other way of self-protection against the flying man than by making him a brother. We are now at the parting of the ways; we must go up higher — up to the highest heights with intellect and heart — *sursum corda* — or we shall sink into nameless abysses. We must make clear to ourselves whither lead the two paths that lie open before us — for the choice is ours."

Here again Helmer made a brief pause; then he stepped to the very edge of the platform: —

"Now one further word about thoughts that soar. . . . The evil does not consist in the fact that men are incapable of cherishing High Thoughts, but in this: — that they have a low opinion of man. Their so-called Worldly Wisdom culminates in their declaring with a scornful face that it is impossible to set up noble and elevated ideals as acting rules for life. He who scents out low and selfish motives back of every really noble word and deed believes that he is wise and keen, that his mind is peculiarly shrewd. Such men are always trying to see through things — they have not learned to look up. Confidence in the good awakens the good. The masses will follow up to that height to which a real leader will venture to lead them; they will never go farther than the leader thinks them capable of going. We have arrived at an epoch when, in spite of the law of gravity, the body can soar to unknown heights. It is beyond the power of the imagination to foresee

to what spiritual heights we and our children may attain, when once, with resolution and earnestness, with confidence and enthusiasm, we endeavor to bring about the conquest of High Thinking. The great philosopher who was filled with equal awe before the splendor of the starry heavens and before the Categorical Imperative of his own conscience, Immanuel Kant, anticipated the motto of this Rose-Week when he said — and with this quotation I bring my address to a close: — 'Men cannot think highly enough of man.'"

CHAPTER XXIII

A COZY SUPPER

FRANKA drew a deep breath. She had listened with the deepest interest to every word spoken by Helmer, and now, when he had concluded, she turned around for the first time and became again aware of the prince's presence.

"Well, what do you say, Your Highness?"

Victor Adolph had risen to his feet. His features expressed inward emotion. "The man stirred me. — Did you listen, Orell?"

The general respectfully answered: "At your service, Your Royal Highness."

"Truly, did you follow it all?"

The question was put in a very skeptical tone.

"Not all. Much was too nebulous. Man's a visionary — a dreamer . . . no ground under his feet."

"Well, yes," remarked Victor Adolph, smiling; "in this epoch of aviation, this thing 'the ground under the feet,' seems to lose its importance."

Several of Toker's guests at this juncture entered Franka's box. . . . The prince took his departure: — "I want to look up the speaker. I must shake hands with him."

Helmer had in the mean time been conducted by Toker into the royal loge. Not without emotion did he make his bow before the two powerful rulers. If by any chance his message had worked upon their

wills, this might turn into action pregnant with results. Power is no illusion. A democratic spirit may regret that any one person should exercise it and may desire to change the fact, but no democrat need be blind to the importance of this fact as long as it exists. Abundant opportunities for doing things are placed in the hands of rulers, even when they are no longer autocrats, so that they might easily shorten the distance that separates idea and accomplishment.

Naturally, Helmer had no expectation that the King and the President would say to him: "Dear Sir, what you have said to-day will give the direction to our future activities." — But at all events, they had listened to him and listened with sufficient interest to express the desire now to talk with him. Who could tell if this might not expedite the fulfillment of what he had wanted to suggest to his auditors?

The trivial ceremony of the presentation, of the friendly hand-shaking, the rather unmeaning questions and answers, went off in the conventional manner; yet Helmer did not prize the opportunity any the less: the seed of his work might have fallen on fruitful soil. After three minutes the whole affair was at an end and Helmer was stepping down into the hall. He intended to seek out Franka whose presence attracted him, but he was instantly surrounded by a crowd of people congratulating him on his discourse or asking him what he meant by this or that passage in it.

A gentleman approached him and introduced

himself: — "My name is Henri Juillot," said he in French; "I am an engineer and I built a dirigible airship myself."

"'La Patrie'?" asked Helmer, interested. He had heard of the triumphant flight of this military airship and also of the accident which had happened to it later.

"You know about it?" exclaimed the Frenchman. "Then you also know the unfortunate 'Patrie' was driven out of its course by a storm and was never seen again."

"Yes, I know; Count Zeppelin did not have much better luck at Echterdingen. But I hardly think, M. Juillot, that you will be very well satisfied with my conclusions. You designated your dirigible for war, and I protested most urgently against the exploitation of the splendid invention for such a purpose."

"I believe that our views are not so very divergent," replied the Frenchman. "My opinion is: the airship is going to give the death-blow to war."

"And *you* say this? You, who worked in the service of the ministry of war?"

"Why not? Activity in a given calling does not necessarily shut out the view of the intellectual horizon, does it?"

"It ought not to do so — yet it generally does."

The engineer stood up. "I will not detain you longer now, and indeed here comes some one looking for you."

Helmer seized his hand, and shook it heartily. "I thank you for your words, M. Juillot. I hope we shall meet again."

"Ah, at last you are discovered. I was looking for you as for a needle in a haystack!" It was Prince Victor Adolph who came up to him.

Helmer bowed.

"I felt I must speak to you," continued the prince. "I wanted to tell you how deeply your address stirred me. A light seemed to rise before me, and I cannot tell you in merely a couple of words what I see in this light."

Helmer expressed his thanks for these friendly words of recognition. He, indeed, cherished a high opinion of the prince, and therefore his praise gave him a real pleasure. And yet he was overmastered by a gnawing bitterness as he stood facing the handsome, manly, young prince. No self-deception availed any more; he was obliged to confess: the horrible tormenting passion so allied to envy — jealousy — began to poison his mind. How he had thought himself superior to such a feeling . . . he had even encouraged Franka to bestow her love on this splendid young man, and had taken pleasure in his own magnanimity . . . and now this evil passion had him in its clutches! There was only one cure for it: absence! The week at Lucerne was nearing its end and then their ways would diverge — his and Franka's. Besides, he had his great solace: art, labor. For some time the idea of a new drama had been gradually dawning in his mind, So, as soon as he should be back, he would immediately gird himself to the task of writing it. As if in line with this idea, the prince now asked: —

"Have you conceived the idea of writing any

new poem. It will be difficult for you to surpass 'Schwingen'!"

"I am going to write a drama, Your Royal Highness. I have the notion that one can speak in that way more directly, more persuasively to one's contemporaries than in an epic."

"Scarcely more persuasively than you spoke to-day. I thank you once more for the vistas which you opened up before me. Auf wiedersehen, Herr Helmer!" He shook Helmer's hand and left him.

A minute later Helmer found Franka. She hastened up to him.

"Ah, Brother Chlodwig, at last," she cried.

"*I* say 'at last.' I had such a longing to see you. You must tell me . . ."

"Oh, I have ever so much to say to you," she interrupted. "It almost seems like that evening when I talked with you the first time — do you remember? Or that other evening when you outlined the plan for my career. Let us do as we did then. . . . We will have supper, we three . . . and talk, talk. . . . If we have supper now with the whole Rose Order, we cannot say half what we have to say. Do you consent?"

"Do I! That will be splendid!"

"Very good, then. So Eleonore and I will go up to our apartment and get the festive supper ready. Follow us in a quarter of an hour."

When Helmer rejoined the ladies, the table was already set. Plates with all kinds of cold meat, patties, lobsters, chicken, strawberries and sweets, were arrayed on it, and at one side in a silver bucket

a bottle of champagne. Moreover, on a small table, drawn close, and presided over by Frau Eleonore, a singing tea-kettle.

Franka, who had changed her evening gown for a soft white kimono, came forward to meet her guest with outstretched hand: "Welcome, Brother Chlodwig! Now we will enjoy a pleasant cozy hour. After all the great and overpowering things that surround one here, one really yearns for something domestic, calm, and comfortable."

Chlodwig kissed her hand: "You make me happy, Franka. You could not have put a prettier crown on this day than this kind of invitation. And I mean to do honor to all these appetizing things — the fact is that, in the anxiety of preparing my address, I have scarcely eaten anything all day, and I am as hungry as a bear."

"I am glad of that. So let us sit down. Let the feast begin!"

"Even the stage-setting is festive," remarked Helmer. "I never saw your rooms lighted in the evening before. . . . This subdued rose-light is magical in its effect."

"Oh," sighed Franka, "it is impossible here to escape from the magical. Don't you find also that it brings with it some homesickness for the simple and commonplace? . . . Please, take a bit of this patty."

Helmer helped himself. "Yes, there seems to be a sort of pendulum law in our wishes."

"Then, what would be the equilibrium? To be without a wish? But let us not philosophize — let

us chat. We should have so much serious talk that I would rather not begin. Your address — I have not as yet said a word about it to you, let me shake hands with you . . . it was fine! That address with its wide outlook, — it would lead to such deeply serious discussion on a hundred abstract things!"

"Then we will not talk about it," assented Helmer.

"But please fill the glasses," Franka held out her champagne-cup. "If we are not going to talk about your lecture, let us drink to the hope that what you suggested to our fellow-men may be fulfilled."

They touched glasses.

"May also what your teaching promises be fulfilled, Franka Garlett," said Helmer; "will you not join us, Frau von Rockhaus . . . may I fill your glass?"

Frau Eleonore shook her head: "Thank you, I only drink tea . . . and to tell you frankly, these toasts are too vague. Let our contemporaries and those who come after us look after their own good. Won't you folks also think a little about yourselves? I am ready to drain my cup of tea to the nail-test if the toast shall be: 'Three cheers to Franka,' or 'Three cheers to Helmer,' or even a cheer or two to Eleonore. . . . And please understand, the fate of the last-named lady affects me more than that of unborn generations!"

"Good!" cried Franka; "agreed. Health to the three of us! — a ninefold cheer!"

The glasses clinked. Then Franka leaned her

head back on the cushion of the easy-chair and, smiling, closed her eyes. "At this moment I do have an attack of selfishness. . . . I feel all thrilled with a longing for . . . for . . ."

"Happiness?" suggested Helmer.

"That expresses too much. Only a deep, heart-filling joy. But not a lonely joy . . . I want your company, dear friends." So saying, she stretched out her hands to left and right, and laid them on the arms of her two table companions.

Helmer felt this touch like an electric shock. What filled his heart was not an unquestioning, unwishing joy; rather it was a dream-happiness which flashed through him like lightning. But what this flash of lightning revealed was a burning sand waste of hopeless yearning. More clearly than the impulse of jealousy which he had recently experienced, this instantaneous burst of glowing tenderness showed him that he loved, as passionately as man ever loved. It was fortunate that the companion's presence checked his impulse, for he was strongly tempted to fling himself at Franka's feet and confess to her what made him so deeply unhappy. But he controlled himself. Franka must not be aware of the tempest that raged in his soul. He would not spoil the calm joy to which she had referred; yet he could not help knowing the source of this joy — could it be that on the very day she had made up her mind as to her future? Had the prince declared himself? But if that was the case, why was *he* not sitting by her side instead of Brother Chlodwig? Well, possibly she had not considered

that proper. She had only invited the harmless "Brother" in order to confide in him her joy, in order that he might be let into the secret of the change of her destiny, he who had hitherto exerted such a powerful influence on her life, he who had been the guide in her vocation, the master builder of her fame. These thoughts had not occupied ten seconds. He took her hand which still lay on his arm and held it firmly with a tender pressure.

"Tell me the ground of your joy, dearest Franka . . . let us speak of your future."

Franka had not changed her position. Her eyes were still closed, her head leaning back: "No, no, nothing of the future now. I wanted to anchor my joyous feeling in the present, that only safe anchorage . . . But I am willing" — she sat erect and withdrew her hand — "I am willing . . . let us talk of my future plans. I decided day before yesterday to withdraw from publicity. That address is to be my last."

"Is that his wish?"

"Whose wish? . . . Oh, I see what you mean. . . . You are mistaken. If what you imagine had come about, then, of course, the lecture trips would have had to cease, but it has not come about."

"It will," interrupted Frau Eleonore, "if you mean by this mysterious reference the threatened proposal of the violet prince."

"Even in that case it is a question how I should deal with it," retorted Franka.

A stone fell from Chlodwig's heart. . . . Now he, too, felt flooded with the joy of the present.

"My decision," pursued Franka, "is quite independent of these eventualities. It takes its rise from entirely new views, intuitions, and wishes which have come to me here during this wonderful week."

"And you are going to give up your activity?"

"Traveling and public speaking, yes. I see before me other possibilities of work. And, besides, did you not advise pretty much the same thing after my last address?"

"Did I?"

"Yes, and you were right. . . . I feel it."

"What are you going to do, then, Franka? What are your plans — your plan independent of the case 'Victor Adolph'?"

"I am going to . . . but it is not so entirely clear to me . . ."

"So, then the case 'Victor Adolph' is not altogether out of question!"

Franka laughed: "How persistent you are. You seem very anxious for me to have that chance. You were the first to call my attention to it. Moreover, I can imagine how eagerly you must think of this affair and desire it. Don't you? You mean that if I should win power over the heart and actions of one of the great ones of the earth, I might then exert an influence, might be useful to my — to our ideals?"

"I might believe that — but wish it?" He shook his head. "Oh, let 's not talk about that possibility — it is much nicer not to do so."

"Let us talk about yourself, then. You are certainly no 'case,' but the theme interests me."

"It interests me, too, — especially if you treat it."

"Do you know, I have made the acquaintance of an entirely new Helmer to-day. . . . Through your address . . . I followed it all — all its political and social and high-thinking parts, but one thing especially impressed me: You are a good man."

"That compliment does not always sound flattering."

"Oh, but you must have recognized from my tone how I mean it. Moreover, the way in which you spoke about Good Will, about Goodness, the rank that you assigned to that quality as a motor power for all spiritual elevation, — you see, I understood you, — proves to me that you would prize no compliment higher than this. Or would you have preferred that I had said 'a clever man'? Applied to a world-renowned poet — that would have been tautology. And that term carries no warmth with it. When you say to any one, 'You are good,' that is equivalent to saying, 'I thank you.' It is as if you would cradle your head on his heart and say, 'Oh, here — here is safety.'"

"Franka!"

Both were silent for a while, looking into each other's eyes. What is that substance called which often goes bombarding back and forth between the steady eyes of a man and of a woman? — It has not as yet found its Madame Curie.

Frau von Rockhaus broke the spell by asking Helmer what the two rulers had conversed with him about. He informed her. And now the conver-

sation turned for a while on the events of the evening. He also told them about his meeting with the engineer Juillot. Franka on her part gave an amusing description of her aunt's last call. Now gayly, now seriously, the talk went from one subject to another and the time flew. Franka sprang up as the clock struck twelve.

"Midnight already! Now we must say goodnight."

Helmer had also risen to his feet. "Forgive me for staying so ontrageously long . . . but it has been so lovely!"

"Yes, it has been lovely," assented Franka.

Words of thanks and of farewell followed. Still talking, Franka took a few steps by Helmer's side toward the door. Then suddenly she stepped on something soft, that lay on the floor — a little piece of orange-peel — and slipped. She would have fallen, had not Helmer caught her with his strong arm. Then only Franka uttered a little cry.

"Did you hurt yourself?"

"No, no; it was nothing." And she released herself. "Adieu."

After Helmer had again shaken hands with the two ladies and departed, Franka remained standing for some little time on the spot, lost in dreams.

"Well, what is it? What are you thinking about?" asked Frau Rockhaus.

Franka shook her head and made no answer. She was thinking of the bar of the blind.

CHAPTER XXIV

SUNDRY CONVERSATIONS

THE next afternoon many scattered groups were sitting again in the hall of the Grand Hotel, and in the majority of them the conversation turned on Chlodwig Helmer's address. Translations of it into French, English, and Italian were lying about on the tables. Some of the hotel guests held in their hands Helmer's book "Schwingen." The works of all the authors present in the Toker palace were not only to be found in the Lucerne bookshops, but were for sale also in the various hotels. Many visitors who had heard the poet's address, the day before, had now got the work that had made his name famous and were eagerly turning its pages.

In one corner sat Bruning, Malhof, and Regenburg chatting over their wine and cigars. They were discussing their fellow-countryman, Helmer.

"He was a schoolmate of mine," Bruning was saying. "Not at all a remarkable scholar: weak in mathematics; hardly up in the ancient languages. His teachers, however, were easy on him — he was the son of a cabinet minister."

The well-known sportsman exclaimed in astonishment: "Oh, you don't say so? I had supposed he used to be a secretary or the like with a count . . ."

"Quite right, he was . . . at one time. His parents died early; his property was gone; he did not

stick to his career as government clerk; poetizing had got into his blood; he was always in the clouds, even on the school form . . . and then he accepted a position which afforded him leisure for writing. After he left the count's house, he devoted himself entirely to the art of poetry. I should have expected a more brilliant career for him."

"Pardon me," said Malhof, "is n't that a rather brilliant career — being a celebrated poet?"

Bruning shrugged his shoulders: "What is it to be a celebrated poet in our country, while one is alive? Did you ever meet one at court? Is a street ever named after one? And one was never known to get rich like a successful operetta composer or a brewer. My friend Helmer ought to make a good match. I had schemed one for him long ago. But he is so horribly unpractical — you could see that from his address yesterday. These sentimental impossibilities! Lack of tact — talks there before a public audience composed of kings, statesmen, people of the world, as if it were a gathering of Socialists."

"Yes," said the sportsman in confirmation, "I noticed that he attacked military institutions with especial virulence — like a real Red. He apparently thinks it is not right for aeronautics and aviation to be used for military purposes. That is unpatriotic. I long ago enlisted in the volunteer automobile corps and I should not hesitate to place my flying-machine at the disposal of the Ministry of War. But, by Jove! that was a marvelous exhibition of flying the day before yesterday. I must get a pair of folding wings like those!"

"To return to Helmer," said Malhof. "A good deal that he said was rather striking . . . things that I had never thought of before, though I am an old man of wide experience; things, the possibility and desirability of which I must admit."

"Really!" cried Bruning. "Such changes — that will turn things upside down — do they seem desirable to you?"

"Desirable for the next generation, not for our own, for people do not like to be disturbed in their quiet and in their habits. We do not only say, 'After us the deluge'; we also say, 'After us the millennium'; for in order to bring it about, we should have to make quite too inconvenient efforts . . . let our great-grandchildren attain a golden age; we ourselves are quite comfortable in our present circumstances; we want to go on enjoying the present order of things and educate our boys to do the same."

Bruning nodded his head in assent: "*We* say this — but our friend Regenburg is right: the Socialists think otherwise; they are not contented with the circumstances; they want revolution; therefore such cloud-storming addresses are not merely unpractical; they are dangerous, and we must be on our guard against them."

"'T is not necessary," replied Malhof. "Active measures against them would only profit the revolutionists. All their dreaming, speechmaking, dissertations remain inoperative through the vast passive resistance which they buck up against — a wholly unconscious resistance, for it is combined of indifference and absolute ignorance. If one of

them speaks in an assembly and the assembly applauds, then he believes that he has conquered a comprehending world of his contemporaries. Nevertheless, not only does the world of his contemporaries remain unmoved, but even among the assembled audience the majority, when they have left the hall, scarcely remember what arguments have been put before them. How little interest men feel in universal questions! Most people do not even know that there are circumstances that might be changed. Everything that exists in the social and political line, they take for granted, like the weather and the seasons. It is easy enough to hear about those matters, but to take an active part in them, that is another thing. People have so many private interests which are wholly absorbing — their career, their business, their trade, their passions, their family cares, their bitter days and their joyous festivals — there is no room for speculations and Utopias and revolutions. Existing institutions have their competent directors regularly appointed to look after their management, or, in case of necessity, to bring about reform; but we do not have to get mixed up in it . . . everything revolutionary is so inconvenient; it disturbs every kind of activity — Heaven protect us from it! You see, that is the state of mind of the compact masses. And so let the world reformers talk themselves hoarse. When they are talked out, it is burnt-out fireworks — nothing more!"

"Do you reckon yourself also among the 'compact masses,' Herr von Malhof?" asked Bruning.

"Certainly I do. Never in my life have I taken any interest in the so-called 'questions.' I have had far too much to do in making my existence as pleasant and enjoyable as possible. For me, the wisdom of life consists in making the little square metre of existence which we possess as comfortable as we can, in trying to embellish it, without at the same time staring at the thousand-mile stretches that lie beyond. And then, one thing more, my good friend: to battle against thousand-year-old institutions with addresses and volumes of poems, as your honored friend does, is like scratching away Chimborazo with a nail-file. As far as I could make out, Herr Helmer strikes at the belt-line of militarism with his aeronautic arguments — I could not repeat them — the things rebound from my memory like dry-peas from a wall. Just look at our military establishment at home. How does it stand there? Is n't it just like a Chimborazo? All that glory, that prestige, that power—there is only one other power comparable to it — the Church. That is the reason the two stand by each other so firmly. And really are not all who have their habitations at the foot of these Chimborazos perfectly contented? Have n't they planted there all their joy, their ambition, their fame, their ideas of virtue? . . . What is the good, then, of frightening them out of their comfortable security under the pretext that other and more comfortable conditions are to be created for coming generations? No, your young friend must not cherish any illusions; believe me, he will not . . ."

"Why do you say all this to me?" interrupted Bruning; "I am entirely of your opinion and have never pretended to Helmer that I shared his illusions. I know the world better than he does. . . . 'One cannot think highly enough of man'! — such an idea as that can only be expressed by a philosopher far removed from reality, and repeated by a cloud-sailing poet. Well, and what do you say, Regenburg?"

"I — what do I say? — About what?"

"Have n't you been listening?"

"Oh, yes — I — well, I am afraid that through all these new sports, — especially in the air, — the horses will entirely die out."

"Even Pegasuses?" suggested Malhof, laughing.

In another niche sat Romeo Rinotti and Gaston de la Rochère in a colloquy. They, too, were discussing the yesterday's address. The Frenchman held the translation of Helmer's speech in his hand. He looked disgusted.

"What do you say to it? Have you read it through?" asked Rinotti.

"I have just glanced over it, my dear Marquis. And that has sufficed to make me angry enough." He flung the pamphlet on the table. "German poets should confine themselves to singing about forget-me-nots, but not deliver discourses about things they do not understand. What does this one know about the action of airships in the war to come? Or perhaps he wants to spoil the pleasure of other nations in building air-fleets, because Germany —

thanks to her Zeppelin — has gone so far ahead. . . . In return our single flyers are far more numerous and much better perfected. Besides, we have really made a beginning with the dirigibles . . . might far more easily reach the forefront again, if this miserable pestilential republic would only look out better for the national defense."

Rinotti laughed: "So then you are an arch-royalist? But you are really doing injustice to your present régime; just see how in the last few years your expenditure for the army and the fleet has mounted up."

"Oh, stuff; that is only hypocrisy . . . they are afraid of arousing the anger of genuine patriots, and consequently they do not venture to hold back the funds as much as they would like to; but at the same time they have n't the slightest intention of standing up boldly for the honor of France."

"You mean the *Revanche.* Certainly, only a very few of your fellow-countrymen wish for that any longer."

"That is just the trouble. Magnanimous feelings, bold ideas are dying out. . . . No, not quite so bad as that . . . they still live, but they are suppressed, kept down . . . and what can you expect as long as a party is in power sacrilegious enough to lay violent hands on the Church? Thence only one thing can rescue our poor land: to restore the monarchy."

"Are you a leader of *les Camelots du Roy?*" asked Rinotti.

"No; the methods of these young men are too coarse for me — they even shock the claimants them-

selves. Yet I am undisturbed: *Dieu protège la France.* In one way or another Providence will restore to us our old rights. If not a king, perhaps a dictator, or a great soldier will come. . . . We have already had one or two attempts to that end: Boulanger, Marchand . . . the right one will sometime appear, and if he should succeed in winning back the beloved provinces, even if he should merely wave the colors in order to hasten to the frontier, then, — then all Frenchmen would follow him with wild enthusiasm."

Rinotti shook his head. "Do you believe so? I opine that a war which your nationalists themselves should start would no longer be popular in the country. The storm must break out somewhere else: Germany would have to be entangled in war with England or Russia; then France might go to their help and in the natural course of events the *Revanche* might come of itself; even the régime might be changed. Why, even a defeat might result in overturning the republic and the new king might have the chance of restoring the conditions that you desire."

"That would be fine! But how can one look forward to such events when everywhere these antimilitary doctrines are making their way not only in Socialist congresses, but even in public entertainments, like these here — and in presence of the heads of States!"

"Words, words!" exclaimed Rinotti scornfully: "borne away by the wind. And even if the wind should carry away a few fruitful seeds, when will they sprout? — In the far, distant future. Mean-

time, however, deeds come to the front . . . deeds of the present, which are the fruits of seeds scattered in the past. The old hatred, the old distrust, the long cumulated threats: all that must rage itself out first. And the entire world of to-day is prepared for it; school has trained for it, the masses are drilled for it; the instruments are ready. And how easily do these latent forces break out into acute manifestation! What is preached by good people, but bad politicians, — à la Helmer, — arouses no fanaticism, however conciliatory, however reasonable it may sound. Can one ever bring conciliation to feverheat or reason to a flame? Ah, believe me, only the violent instincts drive the machinery called history. And those who are elected to make history need nothing else but force, and again force, in order to keep the machine going in the direction which they want. And the general conception 'force' splits into separate qualities: unbending will, unscrupulousness, inflexibility, formidableness — these are the attributes of the great statesman. But only in his political activity; as a private citizen he must at the same time be amiable, yielding, full of good humor, tender to his family, polite to his subordinates — in general, what is called 'un charmeur.' In addition he must have genius; and this, too, is needed: he must have luck!"

La Rochère had accompanied Rinotti's utterance with nods of satisfaction. "You are a wise statesman!" he exclaimed; and leaning over to look the marchese in the eye, he asked in a lower tone of voice: "Tell me, is there likelihood of war breaking

out anywhere? Do you perchance know anything about it?"

Rinotti bit his lips: "I know nothing, and if I did, I should not tell."

Prince Victor Adolph was sitting on his balcony, reading over and over a letter which he had received that morning from home. Its writer was his oldest brother, the crown prince, who informed him, under the seal of confidence, that an old project, which had once before been broached and then dropped, had come to the front again and was on the point of accomplishment. The point was, that Victor Adolph was to be made regent of a border province which was aspiring to independence. By this appointment, the province would immediately find its desires for autonomy fulfilled. This was a tempting outlook: anything rather than the empty show of military service so detestable to him. In this position, opportunity would be afforded him of working up, of carrying out plans the mighty outlines of which hovered before his mind. A joyous feeling of expectation stirred the young man's soul. The future, the future — it lay open before him; and he would fill it with progressive ideas, with progressive deeds, with "soaring thoughts" . . . He dwelt on these words.

Then an idea suggested itself to him. He went to a writing-table, dashed off a few lines on a sheet of paper, and rang.

"Take this immediately to the Rose-Palace," he ordered the servant who responded to his summons.

The note was addressed to Chlodwig Helmer, and contained an invitation to Mr. Helmer to call on the prince in the course of the afternoon, if he had time.

A quarter of an hour later, Chlodwig sent in his name. The prince was in his salon alone. He started forward to meet his visitor.

Helmer bowed: —

"Your Royal Highness summoned me . . ."

Victor Adolph offered him his hand: "Thank you for fulfilling my wish so promptly. Yesterday evening we had no opportunity, and I was so desirous of hearing a good deal more on the subject of your address. Let us sit down. . . . Here, please. A cigarette?" He held out his gold cigarette-case.

Chlodwig thanked him and took one. The prince also offered him a light and then kindled his own.

"You see, Herr Helmer," he pursued, "what you said yesterday evening moved me tremendously. Partly, because you gave utterance to ideas which have been for a long time floating indefinitely in my mind, and partly because you opened up before me entirely new perspectives."

"I am delighted to hear such a thing, Your Highness. Tell me what was familiar to you and what was new?"

"There is, for example, . . . good Heavens, I really don't know where to begin. . . . I should like to have a lesson in things which you did not speak about. I will ask you: If you were a king, what would you do to carry out the lofty flight of your ideals?"

"If I were a king," repeated Chlodwig thoughtfully. "Many a man has imagined to himself that contingency. *Si j'étais roi* is the title of an opera. — If I were a king, then I should have lived in other conditions, should have had another kind of education, inherited other instincts. . . . The love of soldiering would be inherent in my blood — the first king was a victorious soldier; — the concept 'Majesty,' mounting from the humbly bowing masses, would have risen to my head, stinging and bewitching me, like the bubbling spirits rising in champagne-cups. . . . My breast would be swelled with the consciousness of power. I should probably not let it be noticed, and I should take pains to seem affable and natural. I should be well aware that my power was to a certain degree limited in modern, constitutional, and enlightened times, and, therefore, I should instinctively fear what threatens it still more: revolutionary ideas and activities; and likewise should instinctively prize all that protected it: my faithful nobles, my loyal army; on the whole, the conservative spirit. I should simply know nothing of the struggles and problems and aims of the progressive spirit. 'Liberal,' in the court-jargon, is synonymous with 'suspicious,' and 'radical'; signifying a will-power, which goes to the very root of things, is synonymous with 'criminal.' I should not have had much experience of the sorrows of the poor and wretched; that would be to me as remote and natural as a pool in a morass or the débris of a quarry. My consolation would be that the poor people would still hope for compensation beyond the grave,

and in order to strengthen them in this hope, I should set them an example of piety — should perhaps actually be pious, through the necessity slumbering in every better soul of being occasionally humble. As I am one who tries to do right, and should be the same if I were a king, I should fulfill scrupulously my really difficult duties. I should work with zeal and industry. For recreation and pleasure, I should go hunting. Indeed, this sport would involve a certain amount of ambition, for I should be well aware of the respectful interest with which the world would chronicle every successful shot of my rifle and be ready to erect a monument in memory of my thousandth stag. I should . . ."

"Stop!" cried the prince; "you are unfair!"

"Quite possibly. I have been generalizing, and in doing so, one cannot be fair. And above all, Your Royal Highness, I regret having somewhat failed in due tact. I should not have spoken to a king's son as I have. But because I know that you are quite different from the others . . ."

"But you are also unfair to those others, Herr Helmer. Don't you believe that the spirit of the age also makes its way through the seams of palaces and throne-rooms? That 'lofty thinking' and free thinking are also carried on under crowns? Look at those little German courts the princes of which cherish a cult for art or promote the investigations and activities of such men as, for example, Ernst Haeckel! And this 'lofty thought' for which you seem especially enthusiastic, 'universal peace': don't you see that the very emperor who at his first accession

to the throne was expected by the world to hanker after military laurels, has for long decades done everything he could to avoid war?"

"I recognize that," answered Helmer; "but the question means more than merely not waging war; it means putting down war."

"I call your attention to this: I just remarked the Emperor has done what he could. The power and will of a great ruler stand behind mighty barriers and walls. His court, his army, his environment, his whole inheritance of traditional principles and the institutions which he is placed there to preserve — all these things combine together to hamper the accomplishment of his aspirations. The portrait that you have just painted of a king does not apply any longer to our contemporary rulers in their inmost reality — yet their environment combines to make them such. Now, see here, my dear poet, you were complaining that they knew nothing of the sorrows of the people; you are right: the classes are too widely separated; they know nothing of each other. So it is with the princes: those that do not live in association with them know but little about them and form false notions; they conceive them to be of the 'demigod' or 'Serenissimus' type, but in truth they are exactly like other men; differing from one another, good and bad, stupid and clever, insignificant and talented. But they do have one actual advantage: they control more power and influence than ordinary mortals, and for that reason it would be a good thing if princes were to come forward as champions of the highest aspirations of the time."

"But suppose — my objection may, perhaps, again sound somewhat tactless — but suppose these aspirations include what Kant once laid down as a postulate — that monarchies are doomed to make way for a republican régime . . ."

"This will not be accomplished overnight."

"No; and then I grant you that the question is not whether the régime ought to change. Governmental forms are, after all, only forms — the content is the important thing. What must change, what must grow, is the spirit, and certainly in all strata. The general level of all mankind must rise. I myself should not like to see the control of government put into the hands of the masses as they are to-day."

The prince made a somewhat impatient gesture. "I beg of you, Herr Helmer, let us not deal in generalities. Yesterday, I heard a wonderfully beautiful litany of them proceed from your lips; now I should like something positive, concrete. For that reason, I put my question to you: What would you *do* if you were a king? *Do — work at* — that is the gist of the matter. And a king can do things, as long as Kant's wish is not as yet fulfilled — because he has much power; not unlimited power, of course. Put to yourself this case: that you — you yourself, no one else, you with all your experiences, your knowledge, your poetic accomplishment — were suddenly made a powerful king. . . . One can imagine one's self in another position — I know it from experience. I have often asked myself, if I were a common soldier, if I were a poor proletarian, how should I feel, what should I try to do in order to win a little

happiness and freedom for myself and my fellows, or to give vent to my wrath over the unfairness under which we sigh and drudge. . . . Perhaps you do not know, Helmer, that I take a passionate interest in social problems; that often, just as others sneak into gambling-hells or other places of forbidden pleasure, I have slipped into assemblies where the Socialists . . ."

"I know it, Your Highness," interrupted Helmer.

The prince had been speaking with animated voice and his cheeks were flushed. Now he seized Chlodwig's hand. "So then, tell me! You who are a poet and therefore something of a prophet; you who would raise goodness to the level of a motive force for political action, — tell me, how would you help the people?"

"What people? Mine? Is it impossible to help one people alone. In our day of universal international intercourse and trade, every country is dependent on every other. One nation cannot by itself be rich, happy, and independent. The nations are not hermits; they form a community. In my kingdom, could I put down capitalism, could I do away with war, if others threatened me with it; if I took down my own tariff walls, could I break through the limitations of the others? There is no individual happiness — '*reciprocally*' — '*coöperatively*' — '*mutually*': those are the adverbs without which no blissful verb can be conjugated."

"Then what would you do?"

"Seek to make alliances with my fellow-royalties. I should — yet I have no perfected plan of action

in my mind, Prince. Only one thing is quite clear: the mechanicians have won over a new element which for many thousands of years they never dared hope to enter into. There is also a spiritual, a moral upper ocean into which hitherto no one has ventured to steer the so-called ship of State. I cherish the faith that by this time among the potentates, one — the Zeppelin — is born and will work and accomplish, and dare obstinately, confidently, prophetically, in spite of all doubts, all resistance; and will let his ship mount up into those heights of light. . . . Pardon me, Prince, I have one great fault into which I am always falling: speaking far too much in metaphors."

"Pardonable in a poet."

"But you wished to hear something concrete, positive, — in this respect I have served you ill."

"No; your Zeppelin picture gives me a quite correct orientation. First one must gather from the light of reason, even if no experience answers for it, that a thing is feasible; then one must will and dare. The individual manipulations will come into play later."

Helmer gazed at the prince. A warm wave of liking for him arose in his heart; then instantly this same heart seemed to contract as if under a cold pressure. The thought of Franka . . . how natural it would be that she should love that man. . . .

As if Victor Adolph had read the poet's thoughts, he asked: "You are an old acquaintance of Fräulein Garlett's, are you not?"

Chlodwig gave a start. "Yes, Your Royal Highness."

"The lady interests me very much. Can you tell me anything of her story?"

Helmer told him what he knew: the secluded childhood and youth with her father who was in slender circumstances; her worship of that father; the summons to the grandfather's home; the fabulous inheritance; and then her passionate desire to accomplish some great work, to offer herself up in the service of her fellow-men — as if an atonement for the unearned wealth; then her career and its results.

"A remarkable fortune!" exclaimed Victor Adolph. "You were her teacher?"

"I? Her teacher?"

"Yes, she told me so herself."

"She meant that when she was as yet uncertain how she might find the great thing which she dreamed of doing, I gave her some advice."

"And has not this pretty young woman had any love-affair in the course of her life?"

"I know of none."

"Is she so cold? She must have had many suitors."

"Indeed, she has. She has been much sought after and has refused many an offer."

"And you yourself, Herr Helmer, in all this giving of advice, has your heart remained without a wound?"

"Your Highness . . . I . . ."

"Well, well; it was an indiscreet question. Pray don't feel obliged to answer it."

The valet brought the afternoon mail on a silver salver, and at the same time announced that His Excellency the adjutant to the King of Italy desired

to see His Highness. Chlodwig arose and took his departure.

The prince shook hands with him: "Auf wiedersehen. We will have another talk — not on indiscreet questions, but about dirigible ships of State."

"Papa, am I interrupting you?"

Gwendoline stood at the door of Toker's room.

"Of course, you interrupt me, for I am never unoccupied. But come in, Gwen; it will do me good to have you divert me a little from all kinds of melancholy things."

The young girl stepped nearer. "How is that? You are in trouble! Does not everything go according to your wish in this rose-magic of which you are yourself the great conjurer?"

"Here everything is fairly satisfactory; but outside, in the wide world!" And he indicated a heap of newspapers and letters lying before him on the table.

While glancing through these messages from the outside world, John Toker had been spending a couple of uncomfortable hours. Very bad tidings had come. Not only the alarmist predictions which emanate from those parties that always have on tap announcements of an unavoidable war with this, that, or the other neighboring State; but also positive proofs that in various places, in circles that had the necessary power in their hands, the intention prevailed to deliver the blow. In more than one center of discord, little flames were rising and might easily break out into a destructive conflagration.

The press was not lacking in writers who were working with poker and bellows for this end so desirable to them for many reasons. Fortunately there were not lacking, among either rulers or statesmen, those who were using their best endeavors to stamp out the dangerous embers; who hesitated about drawing the sword even when they were provoked — but the decision finally lies, after all, with the aggressive and not with the opposing portion.

Not only from the papers, but also from private sources, Toker had received the intimation that dangerous dissensions were likely to break out. He was in friendly relationship with powerful circles in various countries, and he got wind of much that was going on behind the scenes in politics. Thus it had been conveyed to him that day that one country, whose chief ruler was thoroughly opposed to war, had a large military party working with all its might, in order that an insignificant question at issue should be made the cause for an ultimatum. This party desired to march right in. It found that the moment was favorable. The victory would be easily won; glory and laurels might be obtained; internal dangers fermenting might thus be obviated; and in spite of the opposition of the monarch they were plotting to aggravate the friction in order that the "marching in" might be plausible.

However, that is not the proper word: what the war-lovers in question had in mind was not "marching in," but "flying in." In all countries the air-fleets had attained considerable proportions, but just at this time this particular State had made a

remarkable advance. Moreover, a new invention in the domain of aviation had been recently made and was kept a great secret, and a new explosive had been introduced. With this, the enemy could be annihilated and the world confounded. The admiral of the air-fleet was all on fire to enrich the military history of the world with a hitherto unheard-of battle and victory. John A. Toker felt a quite peculiar horror at this form of the modern, ultra-modern art of war; not only because he expected the most terrible destruction from it; but also his æsthetic and moral feelings were revolted by seeing hell carried even into the regions of the skies.

Still other catastrophes were looming on the horizon: bread riots; economic crises; terrorism from below by assassination and incendiarism; terrorism from above by executions; . . . and for those who looked far ahead, a general break-up; civilization buried under ruins. Can this be the end and goal of mankind's lofty aspirations?

Toker felt like one who has brought a wonderfully beautiful garden, situated at the foot of a mountain, to a high state of cultivation, and suddenly notices that the mountain has begun to smoke.

"Every comparison limps" is a correct expression: the lameness in this figure is, that the destruction streaming from the fiery depths of the volcano is the work of incomprehensible, uncontrollable powers of nature, while in these eruptions treasured as "historical," men themselves have fabricated

the lava, and, thanks to their crater-deep idiocy, use it for their own destruction.

Yet not all the news that had been brought to Toker's notice, and lay there in a great pile, was bad: there were also some encouraging items. If one attentively listens in every quarter, one can hear the subdued regular rumble of the great loom, where the genius of Progress is weaving stitch by stitch the web of Unity which is bound ultimately to bring together the whole civilized world. Toker's alarm grew out of the fact that the all-reigning spirit of growth is often interrupted and set back by the spirit of destruction, which by fits and starts exercises its harmful calling and in some places undoes what seems on the fairest path of development.

"Well, Gwen, what amusing thing have you to tell me?"

"Amusing? I wanted a serious talk with you, papa."

"You — and serious! But really you look quite solemn. Has anything happened?"

Gwendoline made several attempts to speak, and then paused again; she was seeking for the right words and could not find them.

"Courage, Gwen! Have you some wish?"

"More than that, papa; — it is a resolution."

"Oho! that sounds really serious. Perhaps you want to marry one of my Rose-Knights. We should have to think that over very gravely."

"You are making sport of me, papa. I believe you consider me a very stupid girl, and, indeed, I know I am. Up till now I have not taken any in-

terest in all the great things which you are working for. But in these last few days my eyes have been opened."

"Have you been listening to all the things that my great guests have said, and did you understand them?"

"No, not all. I believed, as you yourself seem to believe, that those things are too high for me; that I could not understand them; that they had nothing to do with me. Only when the personal appeal was made to me, did I prick up my ears."

Mr. Toker raised his head in astonishment. "An appeal made to you personally? How so? by whom?"

"By Franka Garlett: 'Ye young maidens, listen to me!' she said. I listened to her and . . ."

"Well . . . and . . .?" urged Toker eagerly.

Gwendoline, who had been standing behind the writing-table, now sat down, as she was frequently wont to do, on the arm of Toker's chair. She put her arm around her father's neck and said: "You have called all these prominent people here, have n't you, in order that their words, which you permit to be so freely uttered, may have a wide audience, may arouse to convictions and to deeds; in a word, may make proselytes . . ."

"Yes, that is my intention."

"Well, I believe it will succeed. I know of one enthusiastic proselyte already made by Miss Garlett."

"You, my dear?"

"Yes, I. Let me have a share in your work; ini-

tiate me! I want to learn to have the same kind of ideas. I don't believe that I lack the ability. Yesterday, I listened very attentively to the address of that 'Schwingen' poet. (And between us, if I am not mistaken, he is in love with Miss Garlett.) I could not understand all that he said, but still I understood enough to get some new light; the question is to make men, that is to say, their souls, fly up into higher regions."

Quite correct, thought Toker; but that their souls may fly high, the main thing is to help their bodies out of wretchedness, depravity, hunger, and squalor — the masses must be able to free themselves. Aloud he said: "Just see, how my little girl has profited from the teachings of my speakers! Gwen, this gratifies me, indeed! Go on with your thinking and your learning."

"But I should like also *to do* something, papa, and you must tell me what!"

"Just at this moment I can't tell you what you will be capable of doing. First let what has been sowed in your little head during these last two days ripen. I have my doubts about such sudden conversions. Nine chances out of ten, such seeds will be blown away again."

Gwendoline sprang to her feet: "Have you so little faith in me?" she exclaimed reproachfully. "No wonder, though, for up till now I have been such a superficial good-for-nothing thing."

"You have been a child, and that was all that was expected of you; there is no reason why you should not remain such for a while yet. Destinies and

tasks are unequally distributed. Not all men can give themselves exclusively to caring for the weal of others; there must be some, also, who are carelessly happy themselves — especially in life's Maytime."

The morning after the supper with Helmer, Franka awoke with a dull headache. She had not slept well, but restlessly, feverishly, anxiously. She could not have told what had filled her mind with worry, with anticipation, with uncertainty; for her thoughts had led her on rather confused meanderings. Now as she got up, she felt that there was a burden on her mind, and she explained this state of things by the deluge of impressions that had swept over her, and by the fact that her resolution to renounce her career as a lecturer had left her facing an uncertain and aimless future. . . . And yet at the same time this resolution was agreeable to her, for in that career she no longer saw before her any shining goal, any prize of victory to satisfy her longing.

Aye, it was longing which lurked in the background of her unrest. Longing? For what? Franka was no unsophisticated child, and she put the question to herself, without unconscious bashfulness: "Is my hour come? Does Nature demand her rights? Do I wish to live, to love?"

Her thoughts turned on the two young men who for several days had filled her imagination and her dreams. But neither of them had declared himself. The prince was perhaps too proud, the poet too modest, to want to marry her. And to which of them

should she give the preference? To this question her heart gave a whispered answer, but so softly whispered that it was not decisive.

After her cold morning bath and her hot morning tea, she felt refreshed and somewhat calmer. She put on a simple street-toilette and left her room. She felt the need of getting out into free nature, and she bent her steps toward the neighboring wood. Purposely she refrained from inviting Frau Eleonore to accompany her, for she wanted to be alone with her thoughts, to take counsel of her own heart.

She wanted to ask herself what now were her wishes, her hopes, her purposes. — Was the resolution definitely fixed to retire from a public career? Was it justified? She had taken up as her task "To accomplish something great": was this task accomplished? And was it not presumption to suppose that she was capable of accomplishing anything "great"? To do that, one must be great one's self, and that she certainly was not. During this Rose-Week, when she had met with so many brilliant men and women of genius, she had fallen very low in her own estimation.

What was she with her rather superficial fluency in comparison with all these mighty artists, thinkers, poets, inventors? Could she only tell them all how insignificant she felt in comparison with them! Just as there are attacks of pride and ambition, so Franka now had an attack of the deepest humility, a strong yearning for seclusion: — it was one of those hours when one wishes one's Ego dismounted from its too prominent pedestal, whereon it has been stand-

ing in far too haughty isolation; when one would like to compel it into a kneeling and leaning attitude of humbleness before a dearer "Thou" . . .

Through the grove breathed a delicious fragrance of warm resin and moist moss. Buried in her thoughts, Franka had been wandering for an hour hither and thither through the forest, and had reached a spot where a wooden seat was built around an ancient oak tree. She was rather tired, and so sat down on the seat, winding her arm around the trunk and leaning her forehead on it: thus she rested. The air was hot and full of the hum of insects. An agreeable weariness closed Franka's eyelids; yet she was not asleep, only sinking into a comfortable half-doze, comparable to the feeling that plants may have under the caress of the sunbeams or the fanning of gentle breezes. Her breath, the beating of her heart and the song of the forest, the whispering of the tree-tops, melted together into one harmonious rhythm. It was the undefined, softly soothing delight of mere existence — nothing more. And yet with it all was mingled something new, something never before experienced by her, something that did not seem to belong wholly to the present, but throbbed as if at the coming of a future fulfillment —

A voice startled her out of this twilight of the soul: "Is that you, Signorina Garlett?"

It was the great Italian tragédienne who was out also for a lonely morning walk.

Franka sprang up.

"Don't move. I will sit down with you for a few

minutes. It is very charming here, so quiet and peaceful. I have disturbed you. You were deep in dreams . . . probably you were thinking about your lover."

"I have no lover."

"That is incredible — only you will not confide in me. But you might, carina. I am so much older than you are; I have tasted so fully of the joys and sorrows of life, and I know well that we women — if we are genuine women — experience all our pleasure and all our grief only through love . . . everything else is nothing. Our art, our beauty, our social or domestic virtues — all that is only the shell, is only the tabernacle; the true sanctuary is our burning and bleeding heart."

"So speaks one from the South," replied Franka. "The rest of us are colder. My heart truly — up to the present time — has neither burned nor bled for any man. I do not take into account any passing little acceleration of its throbbing. My work, my duties, have completely occupied me — up to now . . ."

"What has been your special work?"

"Making girls over into thinking beings."

"Thinking — not feeling?"

"The one does not exclude the other. Men, too, feel and love; at the same time it is their duty to think — not that they always do so — I must agree to that. You, great artist that you are, who have penetrated into the depths of poetry, would surely be the last person to forbid women thinking."

"No, I do not; but I insist that they love. And ultimately, they all obey — even the women of the

North. In the Northern poets especially I have found the most fundamental love-problems. However, madamigella Franka, you just said the words 'up to now' in a tone which makes me suspect that perhaps the coldness which you boast of is already beginning to melt."

Franka's cheeks glowed: "How you read people's souls, maestra!"

The other smiled sweetly, and seized Franka's hand. "So it must come," said she, "once in every life. But," she added in another tone, "shan't we return? Don't you hear distant thunder?"

In fact a low growling of thunder was heard, repeated two or three times; and the air was sultry. Franka got up.

"Very well, let us go. We shall have time enough to get under shelter. You see, it is the same way with my love . . . far and low I seem to hear the premonition of what may prove to be a heart-storm. It has not as yet arrived, but it is coming and it will be welcome: I shall not flee from it, as we are now trying to escape from the threatening shower."

By this time a few scattering drops were falling. The two women hastened their steps. Suddenly the Italian actress said: —

"Its coming has been noticed."

"The coming of what? A quarter of an hour ago, the sky was perfectly blue."

"I am speaking of your love-affair, dearest."

Franka, surprised, lifted her head. "What do you mean?"

"Well — the handsome German prince."

CHAPTER XXV

SCENES OF BEAUTY AND OF LOVE

THIS evening the exercises were devoted to the concept Beauty. They were to begin with a concert; but not a concert of tones, rather of colors and lines — charm for the eye, intoxication for the sense of sight — the delight of seeing, carried to ecstasy.

The hall was only faintly lighted. Toker and his guests were not as usual on the platform; a white screen surrounded by a golden frame filled the background. Franka sat in the box that she had occupied on the evening of Helmer's address. But this time Helmer was with her. He had escorted her into the hall, having been, as usual, seated next her at the dinner-table. The two had not had much opportunity to talk together, as some one opposite had engaged Chlodwig in an urgent conversation, and Franka, on her side, was taken possession of by Gwendoline — who had also accompanied them to the box. In the background sat Frau von Rockhaus and Malhof.

Franka was scanning the hall with her opera-glass.

"Are you looking for some one?" asked Helmer; "he is sitting there in the lower tier at the right."

Franka's glass followed the indicated direction, and she caught sight of Victor Adolph, who had turned round and was likewise searching the audience with

his lorgnette. The two glasses met and the prince bowed. Franka answered the greeting and blushed, as Helmer saw only too well.

"I had a long talk with the prince to-day," he said; "he is a fine fellow."

"Who? — the German king's son?" broke in Gwendoline; "he pleases me, too, immensely; and if he were not so evidently taken with our Miss Garlett, I should have a good flirtation with him."

On the signal for beginning the programme — three loud peals on a bell — a tall figure of a woman in the costume of a Greek Muse stepped forward and began to speak: —

Still through the hall the golden bell-tone vibrates low!
List to it, for you will not hear it ringing
A second time to-day.
A simple word which I have still to say
Of prelude or of prologue — call it as you may —
And then the silence show!

For voiceless colors will be together singing
And lines in exquisite harmonies will melt away.
Nor flute nor drum, viola, violin;
The instruments are called but Blue and Gray
And Red and Green and Yellow, bringing in
The rainbow's soundless orchestra.

This week for Lofty Thinking held its pious rites;
Free spirits have stood forth to plead for Goodness and for Duty,
So let us also worship Beauty.
Let Wonder bear us in its spellbound flights;
Since those alone that have the power to marvel
Possess the power of mounting to the heights.

The speaker retired and the hall was completely darkened. All the more brilliantly gleamed the great

white screen on the platform. A half-minute of intense expectation passed.

Franka turned to Helmer: "Do you know what is coming?"

"Yes, Mr. Toker gave me an inkling of it. Pictures of landscapes more magnificent than were ever seen before — except in reality: nature-framed. The impression is said to be magical."

Suddenly, the white screen was transformed into a view of a primitive tropical forest — a remarkably picturesque piece: in the foreground, at the right and at the left, two gigantic gnarly trees, whose branches arched upward until they met, forming a kind of triumphal gateway; on the ground and toward the back a luxuriant growth of unknown plants and flowers.

"That reminds me of Ernst Haeckel's marvelous travel pictures," remarked Helmer.

It was evidently photographed from nature and in the most brilliant colors. Polychrome photography had, to be sure, been invented some years before, but here, for the first time, perfect fidelity to nature had been attained: not only the succulent green of the foliage, and the velvet brilliancy of the moss, but something like real light, such as prevails in the primeval forest, streaming with emerald tints through the tree-tops and flinging bronze reflections on the brown trunks. Dark and pale lilac blossoms glowed in the maze of vines, resting here and there in dense masses among the branches; here and there hanging down like the sprays of weeping willows; then again, springing from the soil, tall-stemmed,

crimson-red flowers, with broad, wonderfully serrated calyxes — a flora quite unknown in our temperate zone.

The prologue had not promised too much: no painter could depict such a scene: it was nature itself. To near-sighted eyes, the picture may have presented a more or less confused maze of colors; but through the opera-glass every leaf and every stalk could be seen in its sharp outlines, and if one looked with a high-powered glass one might have detected the gauzy wings of some brilliant-colored butterfly sitting motionless on some flower.

Franka drew a deep breath and murmured: "It is bewitching."

"Yes, the world grows richer every day," said Helmer; "but look, there comes something still more amazing."

Through the hall swept a subdued murmur of astonishment. Franka pointed her glass to the platform again: she expected to see another, perhaps a still more beautiful picture, but it was the same. And yet different. . . . Was it not alive? Did n't the vines sway? Did n't the light dance on the mossy ground? — Yes — and now a small bird flew from one tree to another — a gayly feathered little bird gleaming in metallic colors. For a minute or two the fixed photograph had appeared in the frame, and now the kinematographic reproduction of the same bit of nature was substituted for it. To be sure, living pictures were no longer a new marvel, but the sudden animation of the apparent painting — that was the surprising effect; and the new victory was

that kinematography in colors had been added to the achievements of this art. For long ages men had been seeking to imitate, to preserve the life around them — and now, what a long distance between the first rude attempts at delineating the forms of animals or the bones of animals, to the living picture accurate in color and full of motion!

The tropic landscape was followed by one from the Far North: the luxuriance of warmth by the splendor of the cold: a polar-sea region in the morning light. The picture must have been taken on board of a ship, a ship surrounded by glittering icebergs. Here also there was motion; the spaces of open sea were alive with dancing waves; sea-gulls swept by; the clouds that moved along the horizon changed their form and color. A third picture portrayed a bit of the sea-depths. Had a diver carried his kinematographic apparatus down with him, or was the picture taken from an aquarium? The question could not be decided; what seemed to fill the frame was azure water with coral formations on the bottom, and populated with marvelous creatures. Opaque crustaceans tinier than grains of sand flew this way and that quicker than a flash; gelatinous creatures were seen going about in all directions by means of invisible organs; others proceeded by contracting their feet; diminutive medusæ moved slowly about, carrying their umbrellas; little sagittate animalcules dashed in agitated flight like torpedoes; anemones hung there, like chandeliers; shadow-like, transparent creatures, iridescent, phosphorescent creatures — beauty, beauty everywhere!

After a brief pause, what followed was the actual Color Symphony promised in the prologue — a concert for the eyes. The eyes alone should enjoy it and wholly without accessories of landscape and life. The framework disappeared; the whole platform was swallowed up in darkness for a time, and then suddenly flamed up in a crashing chord of ruby-red, topaz-yellow, and sapphire-blue. Then the colors began to move rhythmically and dispose themselves into figures; they obliterated one another and formed new combinations of ever new *nuances;* just as a solo voice rising above an orchestral accompaniment, now hovers an emerald-green line in the foreground and depicts — adagio — a vibrant arabesque like a melody, while the accompanying colors diminish to a dull silver-gray.

A second line, of the tenderest rose, now curls round the green, as if it were a second solo voice. Now the duet is swallowed up by a violet glow and again begins a genuine ensemble of all the instruments: violin-tones from the golden yellow, flute-tones from the celestial blue, a trumpet-blast from the red, a drum-tap from the brown. In ever new forms and interchanging tempos the colors stream together and apart. Here they cluster into balls; there they tumble in waterfalls or hover in flakes like soft-falling snow. The most variegated lights and reflections and beams and flame-gleams and mother-of-pearl tints make up the ensemble. The color symphony contained also a scherzo wherein the melodious arabesques are transformed into a whirl of grotesque hopping figures. The finale intro-

duces a prestissimo with the rapidity of a tornado, of a blizzard, which finally dies down again into calm serenity. And ever more and more pallid grow the colors, ever duller the lights, with a decrescendo dying gradually into the most delicate pianissimo, until at last the stage again lies in absolute darkness. And then against the darkness, shining brilliant red, appeared, a hundred-fold in size, the crest of the house, the symbol of beauty: a rose in full bloom.

After the intermission one of Toker's famous guests, the German physicist, delivered a brief address. He also produced a variation on the theme of the evening. He proved, even more clearly than the animated pictures could do, the manifold and hidden beauties of nature. He revealed the wonder-pictures that are discovered by the microscope to our astonished senses; the splendor of form of the Radiolaria, the symmetry of the thousand-faceted eyes of insects; the delicate traceries of mould and mosses invisible to the naked eye; the rich life in a drop of stagnant water — beauty everywhere.

But in order that the visible world may resolve into beauty, we must learn two things: to see and to enjoy. Could there possibly be splendor of color and grace of contour if all living beings were blind? And could what we see ever be felt as "beautiful" if the spectator remained without enjoyment? The evolution of organisms required a long time until the eye was formed; and a second long period stretched between the use of an organ of sense and the enjoyment that grew out of the use of it. How

long it took for man to learn to enjoy the beauties of nature! In all ancient literatures no description of nature is to be found in tones of admiration. The ancient Greeks found delight in the grace of human bodies, in the noble lines of artistic buildings; but in their songs there is no trace of enthusiasm over a mountain landscape, or a seashore. Among our peasantry, living in the midst of the most magnificent nature, the majority are unmoved by beauty of scenery. The formation of the organs of sense must be followed by the exercise and the refining of the corresponding organs of the soul. Then only the soul may be raised to the inspiring mood which is called the enjoyment of beauty.

After the conclusion of the physicist's address, Toker entered Franka's box. "To-night, Miss Garlett, you must once more come into our circle, and you also, Mr. Helmer. This period of talk between ten o'clock and midnight is certainly the best and most productive recreation after the labors of the day. And you, Gwen, have you been happy in spending the whole evening in the company of your idol? — For you must know, Miss Garlett, that my daughter has conceived the most violent admiration for you — which I can perfectly understand."

A little later the Rose-Knighthood had gathered in Toker's salons. In spite of the brevity of their acquaintance, many warm friendships had sprung up among the famous guests of the house. And, indeed, there was no lack of interesting material for intercourse. The atmosphere was alive with ideas

suggested by the preceding addresses and performances. "This is the week of wide perspectives," one of the visitors pertinently remarked on one occasion.

Frequently distinguished personages invited by Toker from outside joined the house-company. This evening he had invited Prince Victor Adolph, among others, to spend the rest of the evening in the Rose-Palace, an invitation which the young man had accepted with alacrity in spite of Orell's comment that it was a very mixed society: "Eccentric people. A revolutionary flavor. No *milieu* for Your Royal Highness."

The night was very warm. When Prince Victor Adolph entered the suite of salons, many of the guests had taken refuge on the terrace to seek its refreshing coolness. Franka, for whom the prince was looking, had also disappeared from the salon. Toker stopped him as he was about to follow her.

"Fine, that you came, Your Highness. I should like to tell you something important."

"Me?" His eyes wandered searchingly.

"Yes, you. There are things which will interest you and which you might be willing to take hold of and help. I regard you as a young man of high thoughts and ideals," — the prince made a gesture of surprise, — "perhaps I am speaking too unceremoniously?"

"Not that — but what can you know about my mode of thought, Mr. Toker?"

"What all the world knows. You are recognized as an unusual type. You are interested in questions,

a knowledge of which as a general rule does not reach your circles. The weal and woe of the poorer classes seem to you important questions. You are certainly an opponent of any war, instigated from frivolous motives. . . . Let me tell you what is in preparation. In your position, as the son of a powerful ruler, you might perhaps exert an influence which would avert a threatening misfortune."

"You excite my curiosity."

"It is as yet a very imperfect world in which individuals have the opportunity to bring about national conflicts from personal ambition, and where the good will of individuals is required to forfend such evils, instead of security being the normal, natural basis of the intercourse of nations; where one must lay secret plans to save the life of one's fellow-men!"

"I am ready to enter into such a plot, Mr. Toker. Speak!"

"Thanks, but you came here this evening to enjoy the society of my guests, and what I have to say is not so quickly explained. Could you come to-morrow to my study? I should like to give you a glance at some of my correspondence which has induced me to venture approaching you."

"Very gladly, Mr. Toker. Would eleven o'clock suit you?"

"Perfectly. And now I will not detain you any longer."

Victor Adolph took advantage of this permission to look for Franka. He found her on the terrace, sitting with only Gwendoline for companion, at some

distance from the others. After greeting the daughter of the house, he turned to Franka.

"I did not come to see you in your loge this evening, gnädiges Fräulein, because I knew that I should have the pleasure of finding you here."

Gwendoline, in accordance with the proverb which she knew so well, "Two is company, three is none," found a pretext for going away. Victor Adolph sat down on the seat which she had vacated. Franka was ill at ease: she had a suspicion that the prince was not going to talk about indifferent things. He was silent for a while. That made her still more uncomfortable, and in order to relieve the situation she began to speak: —

"How were you pleased with the silent concert?"

"Concert? What concert?" he asked absently.

"The color symphony."

"I was not looking at the platform, but into an almost perfectly dark box in which I still could make out the outline of a beloved form."

Now Franka remained silent. What could she answer to that?

After a rather long pause he remarked: "What a lovely evening!"

"Marvelously beautiful," replied Franka. The conversation could continue on this subject. And she added: "So mild, so fragrant, so still."

"Still? Why, no . . . don't you hear the chirping of insects and the wavelets breaking on the shore? The night is breathing."

"As if in peaceful slumber."

"No, it is not asleep — just see, how its hundred thousand open eyes are sparkling."

She looked up at the starry sky. Indeed, there shone a myriad of glittering eyes. As Franka sat there, bathed in the soft moonlight, with her head upturned, her large dark eyes directed to the firmament, her delicate features as it were illuminated with reverence, she seemed more exquisitely beautiful than ever.

"You are right. . . . Every instant one or another of the stars seems to say, 'I am.' That is after all the deepest of mysteries, that unfathomable meaning of the verb 'to be.'"

"Franka, I love you!"

The words came so abruptly that Franka felt a violent shock. It fell upon her like a burning bolt. She drew herself up and pushed back her chair. Victor Adolph was himself startled at his own words; he had not anticipated making so sudden a declaration of his love. Here once more were those primitive incitements to passion and love: — the summer night, the perfume of flowers, the moonlight . . . and that bewitching beauty!

Beauty had been the topic of the whole evening: the magic of the tropics and of the Arctic sea, of Radiolaria and anemones, but there had not been a word said about the most potent of all the powers of beauty — in a lovely young woman's face. What were all the lilies and birds of paradise, what were all the dancing colors and lights, in comparison to such a pair of beaming eyes, from which gleamed a human soul?

A short pause ensued, during which both felt their hearts beat faster. Then Victor Adolph began to speak in a low tone: —

"You must not be angry, Fräulein Garlett . . . the audacious words came almost involuntarily out of my mouth. Honestly, I, myself, as I said them for the first time, have realized what deep feelings toward you I cherish. Yes, I love you, sincerely and passionately. I believe you might crown my happiness with the richest gift one could conceive if only you would return my love. You must not for an instant misunderstand me — I offer you my hand. Do not answer now — I desire no hasty answer. You must first weigh all things in the balance — for there would be difficulties, reserves . . . I am not a free and independent man, and perhaps great responsibilities will be put upon me . . ."

Franka stood up: "You asked me not to answer and I beg you, my prince, my dear prince," — her voice trembled with deep emotion, — "do not say anything more. . . . I am going into the salon now."

She took a few steps and was soon surrounded by a number of persons. The tête-à-tête was at an end. The prince, bowing low, went off in another direction. Franka took no further part in the social festivities but fled to her room.

CHAPTER XXVI

CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

In the mean time, John Toker and Helmer were chatting in the salon. The two men were sitting in the embrasure of one of the windows behind a screen of tall, big-leafed plants, and were unseen and undisturbed.

"This would seem an admirable place for a pair to flirt in," remarked Toker, as he led his guest to it; "but this privacy will also suit us. I have as yet had no good opportunity to thank you for your address; moreover, this afternoon, I have read the translation of it, and so only now realize how completely our ideas and aims are in agreement. You say quite rightly, mankind has reached the turning of the ways. Either — Or. It truly cannot continue as it is. Therefore, we must put forth all our energies, even if our energies are of no great magnitude. And I have a high opinion of the power of the pen; it can charm in a playful way; but it can also be a very mighty instrument of harm and of help."

"What you say, Mr. Toker, reminds me of a conversation which I had not long ago with a fellow-countryman, a boyhood friend of mine. He asked me how I could devote my art, my talent to the service of politics and such inartistic objects. I answered, 'Because there is a fire, my dear friend. And if — in such a case — one holds in one's hands

a brimming pitcher, one uses it to quench the flames and not to water flowers.'"

"Quite right; so let us put out the fire. News which has reached me to-day makes me fear that there is going to be a great disturbance. The work which we are doing here — the exerting of influence on thinking men — proceeds — quite too slowly, I am sorry to say — in spite of all our apparatus for wide publicity."

"Yes," agreed Helmer; "it is a dribbling, instead of a flood. Before minds gradually change, the avalanche of collected stupidity comes rolling down and buries the whole region. Here I am speaking in metaphors again. . . . I keep detecting myself in this habit. Prince Victor Adolph thought that pardonable in a poet. Now, that I think of it: this prince — in spite of his position — is on our side in all his inclinations, and so — precisely because of his position — he might successfully help us in the endeavor to put out the fire."

"I had the very same idea. You know his reputation?"

"More than that: I know his inclinations." And Helmer related the interview which he had held that very same day with the prince.

"Well, he seems to be a splendid young man," said Toker. "To-morrow, at eleven o'clock, he is coming to see me, in order to plan a campaign. The rescue, the saving of the lives of a hundred thousand people — that is to be the object of our conspiracy. He just told me . . ."

"Just told you? Is he here?"

"Yes, he came at my invitation. At this instant he is on the terrace, as my daughter told me, and is sitting in the moonlight very sentimentally talking with Miss Garlett."

Helmer made a sudden motion and suppressed a groan. This did not escape the older man's attention.

"Oh, Herr Helmer, is that disagreeable to you? Perhaps you are somewhat sentimentally inclined to your pretty table-companion and fellow-countrywoman yourself? . . . That would be quite natural. Don't shake your head . . . young men are quite properly in love; I like to see it. I will not detain you . . . go out on the terrace and interrupt the flirtation, if you object to it. It would be much better for the young lady if she should incline her heart to you . . . "

"Good Heavens! I could not enter into competition with the prince . . . if things are actually as you seem to think."

"Why not? 'Faint heart never won fair lady.'"

"You yourself, Mr. Toker, set me very different tasks from that of winning a maiden's heart."

"Hold on! Hold on! . . . I am no fanatic, no man of one idea. To work for a great public object does not require that a man should give himself body and soul to this affair. One must not neglect one's duties toward one's own happiness. When one has the foundation of domestic content, of cheerful peace of mind, one can work much more effectively for a great cause. It gives harmony and balance. And then, energy grows out of it as a tree

springs out of a rich soil — you see, I can also speak in figures. Well, good-bye for now. I will go around among my guests for a little while longer. To-morrow we will take up our plot again."

Helmer hastened out on the terrace: not as Mr. Toker had advised, to break up the flirtation, but to observe it. Yet in spite of his zeal to find that which would cause him misery — he found nothing: the couple was not to be seen on the terrace.

Franka had been for some time in her room. She did not turn on the light, but went out on the balcony and threw herself into her rocking-chair. She wanted to think over what had occurred in the very same atmosphere in which it had occurred — in the fragrant moonlit, summer night.

She drew her lace shawl closer over her shoulders and leaned back in her chair, rocking slowly to and fro. She recalled the words which had so overwhelmed her with amazement. Again she seemed to hear distinctly the accent in which "Franka, I love you" had been spoken and the still more momentous "You must not for an instant misunderstand me: I offer you my hand." *My hand — my hand* . . . like a refrain which runs in one's head these words sang themselves to her, and here again were the same warm breath of the night, the same penetrating perfume of violets which emanated from the already half-faded bouquet that she wore on her bosom. He was in no hurry for a reply — so much the better! Had she given either a hasty "Yes" or a hasty "No," perhaps she might be even

now regretting it. So the decision was postponed: it was left to her free and deliberate choice, whether she should seize this marvelous Future, big with portentous eventualities, or reject it. . . . "Difficulties, reserves." . . . Her pride revolted . . . why had she not said "No" on the spot? But is it not true — a king's son: such a step is not taken so easily. And it would involve sacrifices, renunciations, struggles. . . .

That very morning she had been anticipating with some longing a thunderstorm of love — to tell the truth, the image of another lover had arisen in her mind; now in truth such a storm had burst upon her, but it had not brought any relief to her mental strain. In the dazzling lightning-stroke of that declaration of love by the one, the image of the other had grown somewhat pale, but was not wholly obliterated. Evidently this other did not love her. He had constantly shown himself active in promoting the interests of Victor Adolph; that very evening in the hall . . .

"Are you there, Franka?" It was Frau von Rockhaus. She had turned on the light in the room and was now standing in the balcony door. "I did not see you any longer downstairs and supposed that you had gone to bed. . . . Why did n't you call me?"

"I knew that you would soon be following. It is pretty late."

"That was a very pronounced wooing this evening," observed Frau Eleonore. "Did he propose at last?"

"Who?"

"Who! The prince, of course!"

"You are inquisitive, dear Eleonore. Let us go to bed. I am sleepy. Good-night."

She rang for her maid and went to her bedroom. But she found no rest.

Victor Adolph also spent a restless night. During the past forty-eight hours events and impressions had been overwhelmingly sweeping in upon him. That address of Helmer's, opening new perspectives before his soul; the tidings that perhaps a throne would be offered him; that conspiracy for the advantage of the contemporary world, which John Toker wanted to conduct with his assistance; and finally this summer night's dream which had ended with such a sudden and mighty flaming up of passion that he had surrendered to it for all time. . . .

The tormenting part of the situation was that he saw himself facing not merely one, but several fateful questions. When he wanted to devote himself to thoughts of his beloved arose the vision of the beckoning throne, and when he attempted to balance the chances and the obligations which such a change of conditions would bring with it, then arose the image of the woman whom he loved — to whom he had offered his hand. And what difficulties heaped themselves up before him! What battles there would be! Had not this step been indiscreet? Aye, that it had; but is passion ever discreet?

When the prince, agreeably to his promise, reached Toker's study the next morning, Toker had

already gone through his mail. He had found various additional particulars which tended more than ever to arouse his fears regarding the threatened dangers. He went to meet the exalted visitor.

"You are very punctual, Prince."

Newspapers and letters were arranged on a round center-table.

"Please, let us sit down without delay; I have put in order the various papers which might serve to show my motives for the action I have in mind."

"I have faith in your action, Mr. Toker, without your proving motives," said the prince, as he took his place at the table.

Toker followed his example and put a few English, French, and German newspapers before him. "Please read first of all the passages marked in blue pencil."

"Those are sheer alarmist prognostications," remarked the prince, after he had glanced through the designated passages. "'War-in-sight' news. And actually maps — already — of the probable seat of war!"

"And now read the passages marked in red."

"Bad news again: bomb-throwing . . . strikes . . . conspiracy . . . lynchings . . . hunger-revolts . . . riots . . ."

"In other words, we are facing a war on the one hand and a revolution on the other."

"Excuse me, Mr. Toker, but perhaps you take the matter too tragically," said the prince, pushing the papers to one side. "The rumors of wars are apparently false or are merely incitements — we

have been reading the like for many years regularly in the papers and yet nothing comes of them. These revolutionary attacks do happen here and there and are always speedily suppressed: order is immediately restored."

"Yes, yes, it has been smouldering now for a number of years. But we must not wait until the flames break out; it is time for us to trample out the sparks." Toker spoke these last words in a wrathful tone. "Patience ceases to be a virtue," he went on to say, "when it consists in allowing misfortune to approach; then it should be called simply unconcern. Now read this also." He handed the prince some letters and telegrams for him to glance over. "Those are private communications from parties in a position to be well informed. They show much more clearly than the news published in the papers that the evil so much talked about is ready to appear."

The prince read the letters and dispatches carefully. "In truth," was his comment, "things do look a bit threatening. What do you propose, Mr. Toker, in order to avert the danger? And do you think there is still time enough?"

"The term 'too late' should never be allowed when the question concerns a work of help or rescue. As you yourself just remarked, for a number of years conflicts have cropped up in the most varied places; panics have been precipitated; people have been getting ready for the conflict; the catastrophe has been generally expected, and then nothing has come of it. In early times it was not so. When the

well-known black speck appeared on the political horizon, one could expect a storm with certainty. Now new forces have entered into the world, which have succeeded in driving away the clouds. The peaceable intentions of the rulers have been strengthened; the pugnacity of the nations has been curbed — the world is gradually changing. And perhaps these perils also" — he pointed to the newspapers and letters — "will be dissipated and there will be time to act. Only we must not delay. If we allow things to go on unchecked, the crash must come."

"Well, what is to be done? And what could *I* do to help? A little princelet like me — I need not tell you — has no power and no liberty. Even at this minute, while I am engaging in this conspiracy with you behind the back of my honorary jailer, General Orell, I am deeply involving myself in disgrace!"

Toker smiled. "This is not your first offense, as I have reason to suspect. Your attendance at popular meetings is well known; your predilection for the reading of sociological books, not receivable at court, is well known. But for the very reason that you have a knowledge of the problems of the day and an open mind, I have turned to you. So, then, listen — this is the thing: — A new Hague Conference is about to be opened . . ."

"Pardon me," interrupted Victor Adolph, "these conferences have so far failed to bring about the change expected of them."

"Still, they have brought something significant, new, and great into the world — the generality of the people certainly know very little about them.

They have not attained their object for the reason that they have been diverted from that object by their own members: — an article was smuggled into the programme that had no business to be there — regulation of war: — for a large proportion of the delegates consisted either of soldiers or adherents of sovereignty. These men were assiduous in keeping the old principles safe from the danger with which they were threatened by the conference as originally proposed — that is, from compulsory arbitration and limitation of armament. But the old principles have not remained entirely intact, for there were also representatives of the new ideas at The Hague, who fortunately achieved the foundation of new institutions. Imagine a congress of freethinkers in which the majority of the delegates were bishops and where the larger part of the time was spent in discussing the regulation of ritualistic forms! . . . There you have a picture of the first Hague Peace Congresses. But I am speaking of the next one. Since the last one, things have ripened. Since then, the desire for peace has strengthened among all the governments, and especially among the masses. Since then the waste of money on armaments has reached such dimensions that universal bankruptcy is at hand. Since then, the battleships have grown into such monsters, and all the other instruments of death and destruction have attained such fiendish power, that they serve not so much for fighting as for combined self-annihilation. . . . Since then, the common people have been brought to the end of their endurance by loans and

taxes and high prices. Since then, the proletariat, always hostile to war, has more and more come to a realization of its solidarity and power. Since then, so many friendships, treaties, and conventions have arisen that it needs now only an impulse for a general European 'Legal Union.' Since then, all the groups interested have combined in an international organization. Since then, a world-conscience has come into being. Since then, the atmosphere has been conquered. Since then, human thoughts have attained wings. . . . Since then . . ."

The old gentleman had worked himself into a fine heat; he had got up, and at every sentence his voice had grown louder. At the last "Since then," he suddenly stopped and sat down again. Then he went on in a calmer tone: —

"Here we will pause — at the conception 'Soaring Thoughts.' The delegates to the next conference are to be inspired with such thinking. They must bring with them the resolution to accomplish something great, something bold. The position of affairs has so entirely changed in the mean time, with its promising new possibilities, and the dangers, so nearly threatening, must be looked in the face unflinchingly. That would be our salvation."

"But what can I do in all this, Mr. Toker?"

"Prince, you by virtue of your rank can obtain the ear of those on whose will the programme and the results of the conference depend."

"And you believe that I could influence that?"

"You can explain. They will listen to you. You can show what golden bridges this conference offers.

You can bring it about that a peace league of rulers shall be formed."

"Rulers are the prisoners of their armies . . ."

"If they do not break these chains, which also at the same time bind the peoples, — then the peoples will do it; and that would be terrible, like every deed of despair."

"And do you believe that the armies would consent to disband?"

"Who speaks about 'disbanding'? If the States make an alliance for one common international law, then their armies — the greatly reduced armies — will unite for the protection of the laws that affect them all in common, for defense against attacks from those that stand outside the alliance, for the maintenance of internal order, for affording aid . . ."

"I understand . . ."

"Yes, I knew that you are one who would understand. But do you understand also why I, an American, have the fate of Europe so deeply at heart; why I want to see the Old World protected from a catastrophe, why I likewise wish that its aristocratic and monarchical institutions, so long ago with us outlived, should, at least for a time, remain intact?"

"Perhaps from an artistic sense," suggested the prince, "just as we preserve picturesque ruins."

"'Ruins' is too strong a term; they are still proud and lofty castles; only they are — let us say — a little dilapidated: a violent storm would devastate them; they can still be safeguarded by rods. Again, why do I feel and act for Europe? You must know that we Americans, at the bottom of our hearts

cherish a family-feeling for Europe. It is the cradle of our race; it is the ultimate source of our civilization — physically and spiritually, it is our ancestral fatherland. We love it and are thankful to it. Therefore it comes about that, when we accomplish any great technical advance or conceive some higher social or political ideal, we immediately feel the impulse to let the 'whole world' — and by that term we think especially of Europe — share in it. We are like children who have been educated far away, have made our fortune there, and regard it as a pleasant duty to send back to the aged parents some share of the treasures we have gained. . . . But let us return to our conspiracy, Prince. You are not the only one with whom I am conspiring. I place my mines in various localities. The Government at Washington is in the alliance. The propositions which it will bring forward at the next conference will not leave anything in the way of 'High Thinking' to be desired. I have already spoken with the President of the French Republic —"

"Yes — as I have mentioned before: Republicans —"

"No; that is not the condition. In order that something great may come out of the conference, it is essential that it be approached with magnanimous resolves; we must attempt not only a little step forward, but we must attempt flying. I know one man, one powerful man, who is capable of making such resolves and such a flight. And what I want of you, Prince, is: Speak with the one man — he will listen to you — you are his son!"

CHAPTER XXVII

SPEECHES AND LETTERS

When Victor Adolph left Toker's study, he felt still more oppressed than he had been before. A new task had been added to the many prospects and obligations that were so disturbing to his peace of mind: alluring prospects, noble tasks, sweet obligations, but in their combination a scourge of anxieties. And there was no one with whom he might take counsel, to whom he might open his heart; on the contrary, he had the perpetual companionship of a man from whom he was obliged to conceal his inmost thoughts and inclinations — this Orell — and now he had two more secrets to hide from him. Suppose he should discover that the Royal Highness entrusted to his protection had offered himself to a woman without rank and title, and had concealed plans with an American for the demilitarization of Europe!

Victor Adolph could not help smiling as he pictured to himself the general standing there, his face scarlet with wrath and horror, his hair standing on end, and the points of his mustaches trembling. How he would gasp for words and for breath, and how these words would be even more laconic and drastic than ever — "Prince ripe for the madhouse! . . .Cursed girl . . . Caught in the first net. . . .

Old Yankeedoodle . . . Proposals to His Majesty! . . . To hell with the Rose-Saint-Vitus-dance!"

As he drove away, the prince met Helmer returning from the morning walk. The encounter was a pleasant surprise. Here was one with whom he might exchange a few thoughts, — at least, might talk with him about Toker's plans, — since he was already initiated into the conspiracy.

"Good-morning, Herr Helmer; I am glad to meet you. Are you just on your way home?"

"Yes, Your Royal Highness."

"Have you anything important that you must do immediately?"

"Not at all."

"Then, if you will permit me, I will go with you to your lodgings."

"That will be an honor and a pleasure. If you please, this way, Your Royal Highness; my rooms are on the ground floor."

He conducted the prince up a few steps, through a corridor to his sitting-room door, which he opened to usher his visitor in.

"But you are all roses here!" cried Victor Adolph as he entered.

"Yes, the whole house is dedicated to the queen of flowers. But all this splendor will soon be ended. Two days more and the Rose-Week will be a thing of the past. Then we shall all be scattered to the four winds."

"But what has been uttered, planted, experienced, felt here will not be scattered to the winds." And as the prince sat down in the easy-chair which Hel-

mer pushed forward for him, he added with a deep sigh, "I have gone through a vast lot of experiences since I have been here."

Helmer looked up inquiringly: "Yet nothing terrible, I hope?"

"That's as one looks at it — may I?" And he took a cigarette from a smoking-table standing near.

Helmer gave him a light, then sat down on the other side of the table, and they were soon engaged in earnest talk.

The prince related his interviews with the master of the house, the news which he had got from the letters and papers and the plans that Toker had developed. Helmer manifested the liveliest interest. The observations that he interpolated, the opinions that he expressed, the warmth and readiness of enthusiasm which accompanied all his words and gestures, were so sympathetic to the prince that he felt mightily drawn to the poet. It did him good to be free to talk with an intelligent mind about the mission with which Toker had entrusted him. His burden of care already began to seem lighter. Here he could find counsel and stimulus and support. His heart began to glow.

"It is a perfect delight, Helmer," said he, bending over the table and laying his hand on the other's arm, "to speak about these things with you. You have experience and a keen insight, and you have — what shall I call it? — *Schwingen* — pinions — the upsoaring spirit . . . I wish you were my friend . . . Be my friend!"

"I am, as far as I may, my prince."

The two men shook hands.

"Truly, I have never had a friend; always nothing but flatterers, time-servers, or else highly respectable jailors, eager *maîtres de plaisir;* here and there, among those of my own rank and relationship, a good fellow all too ready for sport and the like — but a friend? Not one! Not one whom one may trust if one is in trouble or is experiencing a great happiness — not one to ask advice of in a difficulty."

"Is that your case, Your Highness?" asked Helmer sympathetically.

"That is my case."

"Will you honor me with your confidence?"

The prince stood up and walked in some agitation back and forth a few times; then he went to the window and gazed out for a while. He was evidently having a struggle with himself. Then he suddenly turned round: — "Well, then, listen!"

Helmer had also risen and was leaning on his writing-table which stood near the window. He bent his head. "I am listening." And at the same time a suspicion flashed through his mind that he was about to hear something unpleasant.

"Well, then," proceeded Victor Adolph. "Happiness, difficulty — everything comes all at once. During the last twenty-four hours, more things and more important things have surged into my life than hitherto in many years. It has been revealed to me that a position of great power — the position of a monarch — a crown — might be offered to me. I am as democratic in my instincts as any one could well be; you know that . . . yet, I confess, the notion

seems dazzling to me. In the case of other men only, too great power seems perilous; in one's own case, one is convinced that it can be used only for advantage. How much I could help and accomplish — even in the spirit of those 'lofty thoughts' which are at the present time soaring out from here into the world. — Then the mission, which I have undertaken at Toker's desire, to win over my father to an action which might establish on a firm basis his treasured ideal of international peace — all these things would be splendid tasks."

"In what consists the trouble, Prince? I see only the happiness and no difficulty."

"The happiness consists in something else — and the difficulty is, that I must renounce either those duties or the happiness. If I cling to the happiness, I should lose yonder position and influence, and perhaps my rank. I am in love, Helmer, madly in love — and I have not the strength of will to renounce my beloved: — yesterday I made her an offer of marriage."

Helmer was playing with a paper-cutter: it fell with a crash on the floor. He stooped over to pick it up, and thus he concealed the pallor that suddenly invaded his face. So then the moment had arrived, when that which he had so often dreaded was a reality. He had really never even hoped to win Franka; he had himself hinted to her the remote possibility that the prince would be her suitor and had tried to persuade himself that he would unselfishly rejoice at it. But hitherto it had been only an unreal figment of his imagination; now it was the

truth. He took longer in regaining the paper-cutter than was necessary. Now he drew himself up once more.

"So you are to be congratulated," he said, trying hard to control his voice. "Is Fräulein Garlett already your betrothed?"

"I cannot as yet call her that . . . she has not given her answer . . . the whole affair is still a secret. Oh, Helmer, I cannot tell you how it has relieved me to take you into my confidence!"

Without knocking, John Toker entered the room: "Hello, Mr. Helmer; the gong is about sounding for luncheon; I wanted to speak with you about something beforehand. Ah, you are not alone? . . ." He at that instant became aware of the presence of Victor Adolph, who stepped forward from the embrasure of the window. "Ah, is it you, Your Highness?"

"Yes, it is I; but I must be going now." And he heartily took his leave of the two men.

Helmer entered the dining-room in great agitation. How could he endure meeting Franka with the knowledge that the die had been cast, that she was about to belong to another? And how would he succeed in hiding the pangs of jealousy which tormented his heart? Yet he was spared for a time these difficulties. Franka was not present, and he was informed that she had sent her apologies for missing the luncheon — she had a headache. Helmer felt relieved, and yet disappointed. Now it seemed to him as if he had a hundred things to say to her, and as if

he had been robbed of his privilege of being the first to congratulate her, the first who should venture to speak with her about this crisis in her destiny, even before the others knew anything about it.

The conversation at table on this occasion was very animated. Toker's guests, as well as Toker himself, had detected in the reports of newspapers signs of threatening political peril, and there was a discussion of the conditions. It was conducted in a tone of dismay, but not at all in the spirit of the usual political "Kannegiessereien"— narrow-minded twaddle: no combinations based on diplomatic-national-strategical-historical premises as to whether, if X-land should declare war on Z-land, Y-land should stand by X or Z; whether X or Z would have the better chances of winning out; in what relationship the sea-power of the one would stand toward the air-power of the other; from what grounds of rivalry or expansion the conflict had arisen and its outbreak become unavoidable; what clashing of interests in lofty spheres and what alterations of boundary lines were imminent, and other technical absurdities of the same routine variety. No, here were assembled the élite among men, who looked down from the higher pinnacles on the course of the world; who based their judgment on philosophical criteria and their will on humane sentiments.

The French senator and the American statesman, as they sat side by side, had been for five minutes engaged in a confidential conversation. Then the Frenchman arose, and tapping on his glass to call the attention of the Table Round, spoke as follows: —

"I ask your hearing for a proposal." All came to silence. With the refined, quiet manner of a diplomatist he went on: — "My honored friend, sitting next to me, whose statesmanlike services for the cause of peace are known to all of you, and I, have just been talking over an idea which has been suggested by the political news so unanimously commented upon in our midst. The war of the future, so long predicted, stands before our door: not so near that it may surprise us at any hour, but still near enough to make us mobilize without delay all the forces that can be used to ward it off."

"Hear, hear!" cried John Toker, with flashing eyes.

"There are people who desire this war — especially among the officers and general-staff circles, with whom such a desire is part of their profession — and there are people who do *not* want it. Now the question is, which of these two groups will have the preponderance? The masses, for the most part, wherever there is any thought at all, belong to the second group, but they are dumb and as yet powerless — I say as yet powerless, for the day may come, and now seems not so very far away, when this will no longer be the case. But to-day the power of decision still lies in the hands of the few. Among these few some are for war — some are against it. Here also those who are against it are already more numerous; but the others have higher positions and more influence. What we have to do, then, is to weigh down the scales against the war with the weight of public opinion and the combined pressure of widely

renowned and highly respected names. And now comes our proposition."

He paused to drink a swallow of water. The others gave eager attention. Helmer also, who had been till that moment absorbed in his own thoughts, was now listening attentively: —

"Ladies and gentlemen," continued the senator, "we possess here — thanks to the genius and the millions of our host — it is good when these two are combined — an apparatus for publicity of marvelous efficacy. What we say here is sent by wireless telegraphy circling round the world; it is taken up by ten thousand rotary presses, is repeated by ten thousand phonographs, is preserved in all the libraries and archives in existence. So much for the echo. And now for the weight. Let us put aside false modesty; the Knighthood of the Rose must be conscious and ought to be conscious of its noble rank, in order to be forever mindful of the work to which it is pledged. John Toker summons only his contemporaries of world-wide reputation; only those who through their art, their scientific abilities, their inventions, their political activities, — particularly their service in the politics of peace, — have served all men, and therefore possess universal authority. Just as in every great country there is the upper ten thousand of the aristocracy, so we — once more I say, away with false modesty! — form the world's half-hundred of talent."

Toker clapped his hands; the others began to do the same, but the speaker stretched out his arm in a deprecating gesture and proceeded: —

"We have here a tribune which is visible from all the civilized places of the earth; our voices ring out as from a gigantic gramophone. So let us raise these voices in a solemn protest. Let us on the last evening, instead of indulging, as usually is prearranged on such occasions, in rhetorical and artistic performances, — let us attempt an act of rescue. Let us, in a tone of thunder, call a halt to this disaster! This disaster is no elementary catastrophe beyond the power of the human will; it is an action commanded by rulers and executed by the nations, and it must not be commanded and it must not be executed. If all see clearly how things lie, and if all have the opportunity to express their will, the 'Halt!' sounding forth from here can swell up into an irresistible negative. The threatening war — we all know what an insignificant controversy is at the bottom of it — can be averted either by mediation or by an appeal to the Court of Arbitration. If this is not done, if the Fury — a Fury armed with fangs, fins, and jaws, and now also with wings — is again let loose, then it will kindle a world-conflagration. We will to-day give the world a clear demonstration of the case; we will put forth an energetic demand for mediation or arbitration; we want to raise a strong protest against an easy or an intentional sufferance of the catastrophe. In all the centers, where our message penetrates, opportunity is offered for all the leaders and all the consenting masses to unite; and the word uttered here may swell up into a plebiscite that will encompass the earth. Is this your sentiment, Mr. Toker? — do you agree to this, gentlemen?"

Toker, who sat opposite the speaker, bent across and shook both his hands.

"Is that my sentiment! One more mine laid!"

Helmer, as soon as he returned to his room, sat down to write to Franka. He felt compelled to speak to her. His heart was full to bursting. Yet he did not know what he should write her. Only the necessity was upon him to direct to her another of his "Brother Chlodwig" letters, after the manner of those which he had sent to her at several of the serious crises of her life. He began: —

"Sister Franka" — but hardly had his eyes rested on the dear name when he was irresistibly impelled to add, "I worship thee!" Of course, it was evident to him that he must tear up this sheet and throw it into the waste-paper basket. But first he wanted to let his feelings exhaust themselves to a certain degree in the same vein, and so he wrote further: — "Yes, I worship thee! Sweet . . . lovely . . . the only one! I press thee to my heart and kiss thee . . . kiss thee . . ." (Oh, how this word flamed on the paper — he wrote it a third time.) "Kiss thee on thine eyelids, on thy parted lips! Franka, Franka, that another man will have a right to do . . . it is horrible! . . . I am wretched! . . . How can I endure it? Let us not think of it. I kiss thee again, Franka, my Franka, mine, mine, mine. . . . The dear lovely name,'Franka,' in French, 'Franche,' is n't it? Franchetta, donna idolatrata! Frankie, my own darling! Dost thou suspect what bliss thou hast to dispose? Dost thou know also . . ."

This brought him to the end of the page. He did not turn the sheet over, but tore it up and flung it into the basket. Then he put another sheet before him, sat for some time buried in thoughts, and then began again to write. This was to be the actual letter which he would send: —

FRANKA GARLETT!

Again you stand at the turning of the ways and it is the privilege of Brother Chlodwig to bring you a few words — words of blessing. To-day you have withdrawn yourself apparently in order to think over the crisis that affects your heart and your future. I do not have any faith in that excuse of a headache! So it is forbidden me to talk with you about the matter: therefore I am writing. It is, after all, more agreeable for me to do so. If I first offer you my congratulations, it will be possible for me to meet you more calmly. For I must confess that I am deeply stirred. I should not have found the right attitude, the right words, if I had been obliged to sit by your side at the luncheon-table, knowing what I know, and appear calm and at my ease in the presence of all those people, while inwardly I was more disturbed than ever before in all my life.

Franka, do you remember? I was the first to give you the Valkyrie consecration; you received from my hands the shield and the spear. These weapons have certainly to-day become a burden to you, and yet you perhaps feel a reproach from your conscience at the thought of laying them down. Now I will be helpful to you, and I myself will put forth my hand to relieve you of them. My noble Valkyrie, you have gallantly battled and have won the victory — it is enough! Be henceforth — and be unregretfully — merely a joyous human being, just a happy woman. A fire-spell flames around you, but there is nothing fabulous about it — it is only Love. . . .

By Victor Adolph's side, you will, moreover, be able to work for the loftiest human ends. For he himself stands now facing mighty tasks, which he has energetically assumed and which you will be able, by your influence, your advice, your sympathy, greatly to forward. Certainly, the epoch which is approaching is pregnant with fate — so much explosive material has been heaped up, and yet wisdom enough also has been collected to hinder the explosion, enough also to conduct the forces on hand from destructive to beneficent uses. Your betrothed will help in this work and you will help him. Is not that a proud destiny?

But, above all, let it be a beautiful, gladsome destiny! Smile, be rapturous, live, be crowned with roses.

CHLODWIG.

Helmer folded the sheet and thrust it into an envelope. One might judge from the contents of the letter that he did this with a sort of gentle ceremoniousness; not at all: he did it grinding his teeth, with fever-cold hands, with swift-beating pulses. Then he rang for his man and ordered him to deliver the letter immediately.

Bruning entered the room simultaneously with the servant.

"Ah, I am glad to find you in, Helmer; I have been for a long time anxious to have a sensible chat with you."

Helmer did not share this longing; the call seemed to him highly inopportune; but what else could he say than "Fine; I'm pleased to see you. Sit down."

Bruning made himself at home. "You don't look quite up to concert-pitch, old man? Evidently, you

are right glad to have the whole affair over and done with. I, too, am glad enough that it will be ended in a couple of days. A good deal has been very interesting, but the whole effect is so exotic and so extravagant. You know me — I can't stand humbug. What 's your plan? Where are you going from here?"

"Going back to Berlin. And you?"

"I am going to the Sielenburg. The old Countess Schollendorf invited me. The Sielenburg really belongs to Miss Garlett, does n't it? And she has still other estates? All of it might have been yours long ago if you had been a bit clever. But you have let her get snapped away from you: every one has seen that the German prince is after her."

Helmer made a gesture of annoyance. "And you call this a sensible chat?"

"Well, then, let 's talk about other things. There is lots of news. Our famous sportsman yesterday got a pair of wings fitted to him and fell into the lake."

"Regenburg? Was he drowned?"

"No, they fished him out. But if I know him, he will not rest until he has flown round the Stefansturm. Ambition is a fine thing and especially when, by satisfying it, one breaks his own neck and not other people's . . . as ambitious statesmen are mighty apt to do. In their case hundreds of thousands are in danger of their lives."

"You have in mind the old-fashioned type of statesmen," said Helmer, shrugging his shoulders.

"Not by a long chalk. . . . I had especially in

mind our Marchese Rinotti. He will blossom out only in the future, and he will have nerve and temperament enough to mow his way through hecatombs of victims in perfect *sang-froid* if it suits his plans. That belongs to his trade."

"Times are changing, my dear Franz. . . . Nowadays, the national helmsmen — whether princes or ministers — already begin to set their ambition on being considered the guardians of the peace."

"In their words and phrases . . . but you are irretrievably naïf, my good Chlodwig. Whoever is to be a genuine statesman must lie, must endeavor to pull the wool over the eyes of the others. He contracts friendship with other powers, not in the least out of good will toward his allies, but to make common head against a third. He secretly stirs up enmities; for he may get advantage from possible conflicts of others in which he himself is not involved. In order to confirm and strengthen his own power, he without any scruples drives rough-shod over all obstacles, such as treaties, conventions, and the like: in short, he— "

"In short, he is a scoundrel!"

"Call it so. In popular parlance he is a genius. But don't let us dispute. Your kingdom is in the clouds. Only I fear you will soon get a bad fall. Do you happen to be reading the news? Such things are under way as —"

"Oh, I know perfectly well what is threatening; but I know also what beckons. I have long given up discussing with you. It is remarkable how two men, classmates and comrades in childhood and in

the early days of youth, can so grow apart in their views of life. And neither of us is stupid!"

"The difference is this — you are intellectual and I am prudent."

"I hate the word 'prudent.' It sounds cold and harsh: it has no uplift."

"That I grant you, my dear pinion-poet! I am a sober, matter-of-fact man. As such let me tell you a couple of incidents from real life. You must know that the two interesting widows, to whom I introduced you lately — that impetuous Countess Solnikova and that gentle Annette Felsen — have been having a great experience during the last two days. Romances are brought to a climax here with amazing rapidity . . . perhaps for the reason that we have here, as it were, only a week's respite. Now the countess has been making a little flight with your Polish composer — not a flight in the figurative, but in the actual, sense of the word. For you see they hired a fine aërotaxi and in it flew over the mountains: the wind drove them into a deserted region and they had to spend the night in a shed . . . There is no need of harboring any suspicions about it. And as regards Annette Felsen she became regularly engaged to our Machiavelli yesterday."

"Is that so?" said Helmer, with mild interest. "Yes," he added rather to himself, "romances come to a climax here with great rapidity."

At the very door of his hotel, Prince Victor Adolph met General Orell, who came to him in great haste.

"At last, Your Royal Highness," he exclaimed; and added reproachfully, "You went out without my escort!"

"I don't want always to trouble you, dear Orell."

"A telegram has just come for Your Royal Highness."

Victor Adolph, surprised, took the dispatch and tore open the envelope. He was evidently startled. The dispatch was from his father: — "Your presence here is imperatively needed in a highly important political emergency, affecting you personally. Come by next train."

"If possible we must leave this very day. Please, General, find what time the trains start and bring me the information to my room. I will precede you."

As soon as he reached his room, he threw himself down into his easy-chair, and read the dispatch a second time. Evidently it concerned that eventuality of the throne . . . then he must obey. Besides, he would necessarily in any case obey such a peremptory command of his father and king. Yet how inconveniently it came. . . . That other great eventuality — his relations with Franka — was still in the air — he had not as yet received her answer, and she knew nothing of the difficulties that had to be surmounted. To depart now! Truly, too many complications . . .

General Orell brought the time-table. The next, being also the last train, left at five o'clock in the afternoon. It was now one, — time enough for making preparations and for a farewell call upon

Franka. He felt he must speak with her. He took a hasty luncheon with Orell. Then he returned to his study and put his papers in order. He wrote to Toker, explaining his sudden departure and promised to keep his task in mind. He also addressed a few cordial lines to Helmer.

Now the next thing was to go to Franka. What should he say to her? If she accepted his proposal, — and he really had no doubt that she would, — the engagement could not possibly be made public — certainly not at this time, when the question of the accession to the throne was still undecided: it would be the most unsuitable moment to anger his father. His choice would anger not only his father, but the whole clique. He was well aware of that. What a lunatic world! What a compulsion! Under other circumstances, he would have been more than willing to renounce all the prerogatives of his rank, in order, without further dissimulation, to follow the dictates of his heart as a private citizen. But the question for him did not merely concern an empty title and the insignificant gratifications connected with it; it was perhaps a question of an actual position of power in which he could do immeasurable public service. Even if he did not attain the crown, it would nevertheless be necessary to retain his rank and his influence for the furtherance of the mission entrusted to him by Toker. If he now should fall out with his family and the people of his own class, how could he then carry on a propaganda among them for the objects of the conspiracy? It was a complicated situation — no single direct

aim for his duties and desires. But supreme in his heart, his fancy, his very blood, was still the image of the lovely Franka, and there was the hot desire to hold her in his arms.

With quick steps and a mind deeply disturbed, he covered the short distance back to the Rose-Palace. He found the door to Franka's apartments open; the anteroom was empty, and he knocked at the salon door and entered.

Frau von Rockhaus came to meet him: "Oh, Your Royal Highness . . ."

"May I speak with Fräulein Garlett?"

"Franka is not at home. How sorry she will be—"

"No, no, my dear lady, she must not be denied to me. . . . I must speak with her — it is too important."

"On my word of honor, she is not in. She went out a quarter of an hour ago with Miss Toker. She did not go down to the déjeuner, and so Miss Toker came to see what had become of her and persuaded her to take a drive — the fresh air would do her good."

"Then I will wait till she returns."

"The two ladies will not be back before five o'clock. Their intention was to go to a place of resort, quite a distance away."

"What was the name of the place?"

"I do not remember the name."

Victor Adolph suppressed a curse. This was too unfortunate. So, then, he would have to leave the town without seeing her again. . . . He begged permission to write a few lines for the young lady.

Frau Eleonore conducted him to the writing-table, and provided him with paper. He began to write, but his hand trembled so violently that the letters ran together, and he could not collect his thoughts. He threw the pen aside, crumpled up the sheet, and arose: "I prefer to write at home," said he, and hastily took his departure.

In the quiet of his own room, he managed, after much consideration and some false beginnings, to compose the following message: —

GNÄDIGES FRÄULEIN!

As I have not as yet received a consenting answer to my question, I do not venture to use any more intimate address. Frau von Rockhaus will tell you that I came to see you. But she does not know how unhappy it made me to miss you. A telegram from my father — which I inclose — compels me to leave Lucerne by the five o'clock train. It is terrible to me not to have had a chance to see you and talk with you before my departure. I know that you are to remain in Lucerne for three or four days longer. I hope sincerely that I can return — unless you forbid me. In any case, wherever you are, pray let me know the place where I may get the answer from you that will decide my fate.

I still owe it to you to explain my circumstances and the conditions which these circumstances impose upon me. This I can do only by word of mouth. But I will repeat in writing what I said yesterday from an overflowing heart: I love you and ask you to be my wife!

VICTOR ADOLPH.

Address: Royal Palace ——.

When Franka had returned from her excursion with Gwendoline, she found the two letters. She

read and re-read them, first hastily, then deliberately, weighing every word and trying to find between the lines what had gone forth from the hearts of the senders. From Victor Adolph's — although the conclusion of it confirmed the greatest proof of love that a man can give a woman: the offer of his hand — there seemed to emanate a cool breath; from Helmer's, on the other hand, — although in it he gave her away to another, — came forth something like a warm caress.

CHAPTER XXVIII

A CORNUCOPIA FULL OF GIFTS

THE next to the last evening of this Rose-Week was at hand. The principal speaker was to be that young American, as yet unknown to the great majority, to whom Helmer had referred when he said to the little coterie at the hotel: "I know of things which are in preparation . . . there is in our midst an inventor, a conqueror . . ."

In the hall great excitement reigned. The preliminary exercises, although they were of the highest artistic excellence, had been listened to with but half an ear. Only when the American had taken his place at the reading-desk did the public experience that piquant satisfaction which one expresses in the three words: "Now it is coming!"

Franka did not come down until just before the recess; she took her place in a somewhat remote and dimly lighted corner. But Helmer caught sight of her and hastened to her. She was alone. Frau Eleonore, afflicted with a bad headache, had gone to bed.

Franka offered Helmer her hand: "Thank you for your letter, Brother Chlodwig. Sit down with me." And she made room for him on the small sofa on which she was seated. "But tell me how you knew that the prince —"

"He himself told me so."

"That he was betrothed to me?"

"That he had proposed to you . . . and now he has been compelled to go away."

"You know that, too?"

"He told me this in a note. This is really sad for both of you."

"He will be back again."

"Back here? But you were intending to return to Austria after the Rose-Week . . ."

"But he might come to Austria."

"Of course."

Both were silent. Helmer himself did not understand how it was possible for him to speak with her so calmly and not to show any sign of the mighty feelings that were tormenting him. However, he had actually become more composed in her presence — such loftiness and purity radiated from her that covetous emotions and jealous ideas were banished from her vicinity. He enveloped her in a gentle, affectionate glance. How beautiful she was in her flowing white robe with the modest bunch of violets at her breast, and the proud string of pearls around her neck! yes, proud and modest she was, and thus she adorned herself.

For a time she met his eyes. There lay in them the same delicate, affectionate caress that she had detected between the lines of his letter. Then she broke the silence.

"I like your fraternal letters. Always, when a fateful hour is striking for me, comes such a letter and brings me comfort, stimulus, warning, or blessing, as it happens. And in such symbolical language:

at one time, you hand me shield and spear, and this time it was myrtle and the bridal veil. Yet you did not say that; you carefully avoid such banal figures of speech!"

"Carefully? No: he who is tormented by fear of commonplaces can never be true and simple. Tell me, Franka, also quite truly and simply, how do you feel in view of this turn in your fate?"

Franka deliberated. Then with a deep breath: "How do I feel about it? Truly, that is not so simple to say. Such remarkable experiences have come to me . . . in what I have gone through this week: it is not merely one, there are ten emotions. Just as after a convulsion of nature, islands are suddenly surging up, mountains are toppled over, so has my earth-surface been transformed. The Garlett career has been drowned . . . Franka's love-life has come to the surface."

"Franka's love-life . . ." repeated Helmer slowly and softly.

"But that is not all," continued Franka; "so much that is new has surged into my spiritual life. My conception of life has altered, has widened; I have seen such magnificent, such tremendous things arise, things still unsuspected by any of us. And in the measure as my conception of life has grown, the little Ego has shrivelled up. And what this poor little Ego can do for the incomprehensible giant 'world' seems so insignificant to it that it recalls that, after all, it is a part of the universe, a tiny part endowed with a right to happiness. Every man has two souls in his breast, which take counsel and

struggle with each other, and say: 'I claim my right.'"

"Yes, I understand. . . . Then the one Franka does what the other wants, and — a third person is blessed."

The conversation was interrupted: Baron Malhof joined them, and so it became three-cornered. And then the young American began to speak, and all stopped talking and listened.

His first words were: — "I bring gifts!" — then he made a brief pause: — "A cornucopia of gifts: immeasurable riches for you, for all the world!"

Again he paused for a while, and just as he began, so he continued his discourse in paragraphs separated by brief pauses, and the paragraphs marked by concise sentences.

"You who will receive these gifts will not exult like children around a Christmas tree. Children receive what they comprehend, what they have been wanting, what they immediately use. The new things that I bring will be slow in becoming understood: likewise slow in spreading and winning appreciation. Many will indifferently push them aside; many will even resist them. Whatever destroys the beaten track — the customary habits of thought and of action — people avoid. A Japanese proverb says: 'An evil which has lasted two years becomes a necessity.'

"I bring riches. But our society is schooled to poverty and want; it is built up on these. Especially for the rich, their existence seems indispensable. Performance of the baser necessary functions, stim-

ulus to progress: on this the social usefulness of poverty is founded; opportunity for the preaching of contentment, for the giving of alms, so certain to bring one to heaven — these advantages of poverty are becomingly treasured by the rich. When I tell these rich men that there can be riches for all, this disturbs their circle, and they reply indignantly: 'Sheer fancy! Utopia! Humbug!' The poor and wretched are not quite so entranced with the advantages and amenities of poverty which appeal so forcibly to the well-to-do. And whenever they do not belong to the great majority of the dully resigned, they strive to remedy it by planning a new division of the property extant, or a change in the economic system.

"You all know what this attempt is called. But do not be alarmed — I am not going to preach socialism. Division and control of property belong to another field. Here I am speaking of the increase of property: an increase so infinitely great that it leaves no place at all for want.

"Possibly, by application of common sense and justice, it might be feasible, even with the materials in our possession, to banish wretchedness from the world. Whether the existing unreason and injustice would not maintain poverty even when superabundance were obtained — who knows? Certainly not for any length of time.

"More than ten years ago, the tidings of Luther Burbank's miracles in the cultivation of plants was communicated to the world. This man succeeded in cultivating, on his lonely California farm, varie-

ties of vegetables and fruits of a size never before known, and he managed to rid of its spines a kind of cactus which grows in the most arid sands of the desert and so make it edible for man and beast.

"Does not that sound like a dry botanical fact, interesting only to a few truck-gardeners, but sure to leave the great mass of the people indifferent? The world did remain unmoved: a couple of illustrated articles in family magazines, causing a few readers to shake their heads dubiously, — 'Strawberries as big as a child's head, stoneless plums, spineless cactuses — remarkable!' — and then it was all forgotten.

"Would you not have thought there would be a cry of jubilation from one end of the world to the other: 'What — we can compel Nature to new gifts, we can bring forth provender and food in such quantities! We can make the deserts and rocky soil to provide us with such cheap harvests that the evil demons, Hunger and Famine, will be banished forever from the earth!' No, the readers of the family magazines did not see so far.

"Human art creating species, giant species, — is that a mere trifle? Are we not on the way to becoming gods, when we conquer the mysterious power from which flows new life in new forms?

"But wait! We are still far distant from that. Our moral will still stands much below our physical power. Our colleague, Chlodwig Helmer, has attached this reproach to the conquest of the air, and with equal justice this same reproach can be made to our conquest of the hidden creative forces of the

earth. We master the technical, the mechanical, the physical — but where remains the uplift and the depth? Where remains the exultant comprehension of the miracle, where the ecstasy?

"Certainly, those inventions are not passing without any notice. Professionals have busied themselves with them. Capitalists have made use of them; first in small concerns, then gradually in great corporations — but always for the advantage of the exploiters. There are already stretches of the Sahara given over to culture of the Opuntia cactus; there are California vegetable-gardens, raising the giant cabbage, and a lively export trade is carried on with it, made very difficult, however, by the customs restrictions hastily imposed: the poor lands must still be forefended against overabundance — they must never be swamped with cheap foreign products. *Divitiae ante portas.* . . . An agrarian 'Marseillaise' will soon be sung with a fiscal rattle of drums: '*Aux tarifs, citoyens!*'"

"Oh, dear!" whispered Malhof, who was a warm advocate of protectionism; "the man comes out for free trade. Is that also to be a part of High Thinking?"

Helmer nodded: "Certainly. Freedom belongs to the highest concepts."

"I also prize freedom, especially in love!" said Malhof; "but in the domain of political economy —"

Franka uttered a warning: "*Sh!*" She wanted to hear the address.

The speaker went on to say: —

"A strange error has been holding and still largely

holds men in its toils: The belief that the good things of this world are to be had in a constant and limited quantity; he who would have anything must take it from some one else; every man can get more only at the expense of some one else who gets less. And thus, all practical self-seeking, all ethical altruism, all political-economical wisdom is confined to the rearrangement, the redivision, the stealing, and the giving away of the whole existent mass. This error in its most primitive form engendered the battle for the fertile soil: every consumer left dead was a gain for the hungry survivors. At the first beginnings, the belief that the good things were limited in quantity was by no means a heresy . . . nothing at all was produced. In later times, however, such an increase in the general store of wealth has come about that no one any longer would have needed to starve had not limited exchange, unjust division, and senseless waste assured the continuance of poverty! The worse waste consists in the nations' spending two thirds of their wealth in making preparations to annihilate the other third.

"O Stupidity, mighty sovereign, thy empire is abysmally deep! We know well that the common possession has greatly increased, but still we say to ourselves: 'Not enough, not enough!' And still we think that property is a thing which may be looted and must be defended. And still we believe that any one can win only in proportion as another loses!

"But now something has been brought forth amongst us which certainly is as splendid as the conquest of the air: this which is to be announced now

by me — this is the secret concealed in my hand like a costly present, with which I shall give you a great surprise."

He took a step nearer to the edge of the platform and held out his right hand tightly closed toward the audience. All eyes and all glasses were directed to him, as if they expected to see some kind of a wonder-bird fly from his fist. His face looked also so promising, — there was a victorious smile hovering over his lips. It was a typical American face: smooth-shaven, with firmly chiseled features of Napoleonic cast, clear eyes, and glistening teeth. He opened his hand with a gesture of giving: —

"I bring you the news that we are able to increase and enlarge our common fund — increase it infinitely beyond all our needs, beyond all our powers of imagination. Rejoice, all ye who are here present, and all ye whom in the outside world my words may reach, among whom surely there are many poor and heavy-laden! Rejoice — we are all winners of the great prize! Some time will, indeed, elapse before the prize is paid over, but, all the same, the lucky numbers are drawn!

"Let me explain: Wealth consists not only in sufficient quantities of victuals, — although it would be a fine result if abundance of that should prevail in all places, — but it also consists in a thousand other products of human labor. On the whole, wealth is the product only of labor, not of money. Money is merely a conventional medium of exchange, nothing more. Its value is regulated by the abundance or the scarcity of what is on hand. Where there

is no production, and therefore nothing on hand, then even the heaviest gold-piece has no value. Without labor nothing is produced; even the planting and the harvesting and the use of the spineless cactus demand the power of labor; and how much more of it is needed for the creation of a thousand things which beautify and alleviate the lives of the rich — buildings, works of art, means of intercourse, materials, implements, machinery. To have an abundance of all these things, what quantities of work — hence of working-power — is needed! Do we possess a sufficiency of that?

"Now, then," — again he extended his arm and opened his hand as if he were flinging something into the hall, — "now, then, here is another gift: the message of an increase of the universal treasure of working power — an increase beyond all necessities, beyond all our flights of imagination. What we need is a pitcher full, and what will be at our disposal is an ocean!

"This is not the place or the hour to make physical demonstrations in order to prove what I say. You must take my word for it. In a pamphlet, prepared for the occasion and containing all the practical details, you will find the clear technical and mathematical proofs. A copy of this pamphlet will be handed to each one present. Here and now I will only bring the fact to your knowledge that of late a new series of discoveries and inventions have been made. I will tell you of these and of the results which are expected to flow from them. Of some of them I myself have been the fortunate originator, others

proceed from others. I shall mention no names, but merely explain the things themselves: — no, not explain, — bring them before you."

The speaker made a long pause during which the pamphlet, printed in three languages, was distributed. A loud buzz of remarks exchanged, mingled with the rustle of turning leaves, arose. The excitement had been growing more intense from the beginning; there was a general expectation of something solemn, revolutionary, joy-conferring.

This word "general" can scarcely be said to include the dyed-in-the-wool conservatives, who were present in no small numbers; to such people new inventions are a torment — they antagonize and belittle them as much as possible; they are filled with distrust and depreciation in the presence of innovations — the new jolts; the new is dangerous. Not as yet perished from the face of the earth is the race of those who opposed the introduction of the railway on the ground that the trade between Grossmeseritsch and Jungbunzlau might suffer!

"Now what is he going to bring us — you probably know, Herr Helmer."

Chlodwig stared up as from a dream. "What? who?" He had not taken the drift of Baron Malhof's question; moreover, he had barely heard that man yonder on the platform, so deeply had he been absorbed all the time in studying Franka's face and his own feelings. He, who had before been so passionately interested in the events of the world, he who in other circumstances would have listened with the keenest interest to the stimulating words

of the young American, was now so completely under the spell of the two passions — jealousy and love — that everything else sank into a dim mist. Franka also was only partially attentive to what was going on. To be sure, she had listened to the conclusions of the lecturer, but in the background of her thoughts she was ceaselessly engaged with the questions of her destiny now so imperatively facing her, and the more the man on the platform spoke of the treasures of happiness beckoning to human society, the more insistent within her grew the demand that she herself should drain happiness in long draughts, and bestow happiness in lavish generosity, united to the man she loved. . . .

Again the young inventor took up his theme: —

"Radium has been known since the year 1900. Its marvelous properties were gradually discovered. The possibility that this element which, from its rarity, at first cost a hundred dollars a milligram, might be obtained in large quantities, dates from yesterday. This furnishes us with a source of power beyond comprehension. A profusion of force has been placed at our disposal so that all efficacy of work can be multiplied a hundred fold, a thousand fold, a hundred thousand fold.

"No figure need alarm us any more when we experience what molecular forces exist in this radiant matter. Every molecule has minute particles, atoms; the atoms of radium are thrown out with the rapidity of twenty thousand miles a second. Can you picture to yourself the weight of the impact?

"Not only can we procure this in masses — this

fabulous element — but we can compress it. The radium condenser has been invented. It will be mere child's play to annihilate in a few minutes hostile fleets and armies, to destroy hostile cities by means of packages of radium-beams sent down from cloudy altitudes. Reciprocally, forty-eight hours after the so-called 'opening of hostilities' both warring parties might vanquish each the other and leave in the enemy's land not a building and not a living thing."

The speaker paused and looked around. Then he apostrophized his auditors: —

"Ladies and gentlemen, you are certainly astonished that I here announce a present of the good things of this world and thereupon spread before you such a vision of horrors. Merciful Heaven! I do not say that these things are to be, but that you can do them if you desire. It remains within your choice and your will to make use of destructive possibilities or not. Power and force, a force approaching almightiness — is that not a wonderful possession? It would not be an almighty power if it had not also the capacity of working the utmost iniquity and the limit of imbecility. If I could have presented you with Aladdin's lamp whose slaves carry out every command, these slaves would infallibly murder you if that command were given them. But I take it for granted that you would utter quite different wishes.

"Aye, the obedient Genii of the radium-lamp, the fluorescing electrons, can annihilate, destroy, and exterminate; but at our bidding they will annihilate

bacteria, destroy the germs of disease, put an end to the weakness of old age — but they are not going to annihilate cities and useful lives. For the very reason that they are capable of carrying out to its ultimate absurdity the aims of war, their annihilating powers are not going to have as their offering the crumbling into ruins of human society, but the shattering of the idol, Mars.

"I have not come to the end of my gifts: The latest inventions include the wireless transmission of the electric current; and this: the electrical fertilization of the soil; and this: the direct transformation of the heat of the sun into mechanical energy. We have the sun-motor. Have you a suspicion of what that signifies? The primeval source of all life, the storehouse of all power, the hot sun-ray captured in our pocket apparatus!

"Even now, I have not done with my gifts. This time it is only a few trifles, just as on the Christmas tree next some precious jewel hangs a little bag of chocolate bonbons. We are now able to fly through the air almost as do birds. One of my fellow-countrymen has invented a contrivance — he calls it the 'Nautilus'— in which we can glide through the water like a fish without the slightest exertion, with torpedo-like swiftness. Provided with the Nautilus one can go from Calais to Dover in a quarter of an hour. This has the advantage over travel through the air: one cannot fall into the water!

"Then — one more bonbon — a dynamic marvel of an apparatus — the inventor has given it the name of 'Talmi Athlete.' With this, bound around

the wrist, the weakest man can lift and carry the heaviest burden.

"Still another bonbon! The ear-spectacles: a little instrument with which the deaf can hear as well as the nearsighted can see with glasses of high power.

"And still another and marvelously sweet bonbon — the inventor has called it a 'Paradise Air-Bath': a cabinet is filled with an artificially compounded atmosphere: ozone, compressed resinous air, tempered electrical waves, pungent carbonic acid, and a hitherto unknown material. Whoever enters this cabinet is permeated by that physical, causeless feeling of happiness such as the mountain-climber experiences on the top of the Alps, the child at play, the young person dancing: quickened pulses, heightened heart-action, expanded lungs — in short, intense joy of life.

"But to return to the mighty powers we have conquered. The question of first importance is not the creating of new possibilities of enjoyment, — the well-to-do already have a sufficiency of such things, — but rather the abolition of misery: the physical moral atmosphere of the rich would also be purified by this, since at the present time deleterious vapors of crime and illness mount up into it from the caves of poverty. We have penetrated into the bowels of the earth and have brought to light whole cargoes of radium. We have constructed the condenser, and now we have in our hands the mysterious and almost unlimited creative power which decides death and life. — Everything on which the death-dealing

ray is directed, is irrevocably lost — whether it be a colony of microbes or a whole province. We can accomplish death by wholesale; we can strengthen the development of life. Radium can hasten the growth of plants threefold and make them thrice as large; it can also retard growth. According to the way it is applied, the wonder-element is the awakener of life-energy, or cripples it. We shall be enabled by means of it to lengthen the span of human life; we shall be able — but now I will desist. The line of consequences which follow a newly accomplished advance is inconceivable. The gold ingot lies before you — now go hence and coin it!"

CHAPTER XXIX

FRANKA DECIDES HER FATE

THE next morning, Helmer had arranged to be at Franka's at half-past eleven. After the American's address, she had retired, and in bidding him good-night, she had asked Helmer to come to see her the following morning. It was to be the last day of the Rose-Week, and she desired to consult with him about the journey and other plans for the immediate future. She had long been accustomed to ask Brother Chlodwig's advice at the crucial moments of her life.

About nine o'clock in the morning, Helmer left the house to take his last walk to his favorite spot. He looked forward not without anxiety to the promised call upon Franka. The self-control which it cost him in repressing the ebullition of his feelings would be put to a severe test once more. For the moment, it impelled him to seek that forest quietude where he had already spent so many dreamy hours with Franka's image before his eyes . . . . But then she was, if not his Franka, at least not as yet another's.

It was a clear summer day; but in the forest, shady and cool; especially in that place where Helmer was accustomed to retire, the impression of freshness was intensified by the murmuring brook and by a spring which burst forth from a mossy rock and

ran foaming and bubbling down in a series of little waterfalls. Through the lofty, thick tree-tops the sun's rays could scarcely make their way, but here and there gleams of light fell golden along the tree-boles, making circlets on the ground and kindling sparks in the pellucid waters of the brook and the spring. Helmer selected a spot at the edge of a little wood-encircled meadow, abounding in flowers and tall grasses, and sat down at the foot of a lofty oak tree. For a time he let his thoughts run on and drank in the sweetness of the peaceful forest. Then he took out his notebook. He felt the impulse to write a few verses which might perpetuate the mood which this modest idyl had produced in his mind — a mood of calm enjoyment of nature, commingled with the sorrow of love's renunciation.

But before he had written a line, he looked down the path by which he had come and saw a figure, clad in white, approaching. Was it possible? He sprang up and hastened to meet her.

"Franka!"

Yes, it was she. Chance had not brought her to that spot. She also had felt the call of the forest, and she had seen Helmer a hundred paces ahead of her slowly strolling along. "Let him be my guide," she had said to herself, and followed him, not diminishing the distance between them. Now he reached his goal; she saw him sit down in the grass and prepare to write; by this time, however, she had caught up with him, and now they were face to face. She stretched out her hand in greeting.

"How fine that we should meet here! We can

have our little consultation now. It is far more lovely than in the house."

Chlodwig controlled his inward emotion and offered her his arm: "Shall we not walk a little farther? I will take you to a place where we can get a wonderfully fine view."

"No, no; let us stay here; you have chosen a perfectly beautiful spot. You sit down where you were, under that tree, and I will find a place near. . . . I just love to sit in the grass."

He required no second bidding and led her to the oak. There he installed her where he had been, so that she could lean her back against the tree, and he threw himself down at full length at her feet. Supporting himself on his elbow he leaned his chin on his hand and gazed up at her.

She was dressed wholly in white: also the shoes on her little feet peeping out from under her skirt were white. She took off her hat. As she had become somewhat heated by the walk her cheeks and lips glowed and she looked remarkably young. Her eyes rested on Chlodwig's face. How could she have ever regarded him as ugly? An expression of sorrow trembling about his lips gave his features a noble pathos; and a gentle affectionateness was expressed in his eyes — certainly the reflection of his chief characteristic — goodness. He also had taken off his hat: she now noticed, for the first time, how very thick and wavy was the short-cropped hair on his head.

He was the first to speak: "Well, what now? Is this to be our parting hour? Are our ways to separate now, forever?"

"Separate! . . . for always? . . . Certainly not. . . . Helmer, answer me one question. Until now, you have always talked with me about myself, never about your own life, about your endeavors and wishes. If I did not know you from your 'Schwingen,' I should scarcely have had a glimpse into your soul."

"What do you want to ask, Franka?"

"It is not a very discreet question, but I want to know one thing. . . . Are you . . . have you a . . . have you any ties, that bind you?"

"You mean a betrothed, a sweetheart? No, I am free from such ties."

"Then you are heart-free?"

"Did I say that? For God's sake, let us talk about you again — not about me. The question now concerns your fate, your future —"

Franka nodded thoughtfully. "Yes, that is the question."

"Then let us talk about it. Shall you remain in Lucerne? Shall you wait here for the return of the prince, or shall you go back to Austria, and is he to come and find you there? That would seem more fitting."

"Would seem more fitting . . ." repeated Franka in a low tone, abstractedly. It was as if she were thinking of something else and repeated mechanically what had been said, only in order to say something.

"Shall you go to one of your estates?" continued Helmer. "The château on your Moravian property, for example, would make a fine setting."

"A setting for what scene? Would you like to come to my Moravian property, too, Helmer?"

He shook his head vigorously. Franka proceeded: —

"In the forest skirting the garden, you would find places similar to this: there also flows a brook; there also springs gush out of the moss-covered stones."

She pulled off her glove and laid her slender white hand on Chlodwig's shoulder: "Will you go with me to my Moravian château?"

He shrank under the touch. "I? I should not dare to; I could not."

"Why not?" And she increased the pressure on his shoulder.

There was no help for it — the impulse was stronger than he. He seized the dear hand and kissed it passionately on the palm which he pressed to his face. Then he sprang to his feet and leaned against the tree under which Franka was sitting. He looked down upon her as she had just before looked down on him. Her features betrayed no sign of anger — on the contrary, they were brightened by a gentle smile.

"You ask why I cannot come, why I dare not — very well, I will tell you. I wanted to hide it from you forever, but now you must know it — I love you, Franka! I have always loved you from the first hour. But always you have been and are the unattainable, the unapproachable! Even if the high destiny to win you had fallen to no one else, I should never have dared raise my desires to your starry

distance. . . . I knew you would sometime be another's, and when such a brilliant and worthy suitor drew near you, I almost made it easier for him. But now, when Fate has actually brought to you what I had dreamed might be yours, I am the prey of wild jealousy. . . . If you knew what I have suffered during the past days . . . I shall fight it down, I shall certainly conquer it, but I must avoid your presence and I dare not be the witness of his happy love: — that would drive me mad! Since this adoration which I have kept for years like a religion, so to speak, has been goaded by jealousy, such a fire, such a fierce, agonizing craving has taken its place. . . . Oh, I am confessing too much. . . . Why do you let me speak so, Franka? — Why do you look at me with that strange smile? . . . Am I ridiculous? . . . That must not be! My love is not a funny thing. . . . It comes to me as too great, too sacred! When we shall be separated, and when years pass, it may change — and I hope it will — into warm friendship again. Then you can summon me . . . to your royal court. . . . I shall keep my courage. . . . I am no sentimental boy who goes to destruction or commits suicide because of disappointment in love. I have my art and great tasks still beckon to it, and I still have a mission to fulfill. . . . But now, now, Franka, I am profoundly unhappy. . . . What self-control I have to exercise, not to seize you and for once, only once, hold you close in my arms, only once press my lips . . ."

Franka stood up. Chlodwig raised his hands imploringly: —

"No, do not hasten away; be assured. . . . I know what is due to you. Never must you think of Brother Chlodwig with regret or anger."

But Franka had no thought of escaping. With the enigmatical smile still on her lips, she came quite close to him, flung both arms around his neck, and with a little cry hid her face on his heart. Something like an electric shock went through him. He pressed her to his heart: —

"Franka, thou only one, thou great-hearted, thou generous . . ." he stammered.

It seemed to him that this was a gift which she was offering him in token of farewell — the indelible remembrance of a blissful moment. As he held her there in his arms, a cuckoo's note sounded in the distance. Franka raised her head as if to listen; then her lover's lips found hers.

Twelve times the cuckoo called; when he ceased, Franka released herself. She sank down into her former place in the grass, and with a gesture invited Helmer to sit by her side.

"Now let us talk, Chlodwig," she said; "now let us make plans for the future!" And she snuggled up close to his shoulder. "Now all doubts are solved: now the world belongs to us — this beautiful, splendid world! . . ."

He grew dizzy. "Franka, how am I to understand this?"

"How?" She laid her hand in his — "That I am thine forever."

"Franka — is it possible? The Unattainable, the Unapproachable will be my own, my wife?"

"Aye, that she will."

"And the prince?"

"I had not accepted his hand. I shall write him a line to-day: — 'My heart is not free'!"

"Because it belongs to me?"

"Yes, to you, Chlodwig!"

"I cannot realize the joy of it!"

He wanted to kiss her again, but she evaded it: "Only when the cuckoo calls," she said, laughing. "Now we must make our plans."

"Will you not regret it? Will not Victor Adolph be in despair?"

"I think not. It will more likely be a relief to him; for the sacrifice, the hindrances . . . all that sort of thing has been a burden to him, and hurt my pride. I want the gift of myself to . . ."

"Insure absolute happiness, celestial bliss," interrupted Helmer, completing her sentence; "to make the man who receives this gift feel like a king and be a Crœsus . . ."

"And do you feel all that, Chlodwig?"

"That and more besides than I can tell. You must know that speech has no satisfactory expression, for our highest emotions — poets do their best to compass it, and therefore they strive by means of rhyme and rhythm to give pinions to speech — but it is all in vain."

"Still I am going to try," said Franka, "to describe how I feel: without rhythm and without rhyme, perhaps not even very coherently; but you will certainly understand me. It belongs to my treasure of happiness, this knowledge, that you

understand and always will understand what I feel in the deepest depths of my soul. And I understand thee, my poet, my teacher, my beloved. So then, listen, thou who art wont to speak in figures; with two little pictures I can give the whole enigma of my happiness: a haven and a chest. The haven is —"

The explanation was interrupted: for once more and this time much nearer the cuckoo began to call. At the same instant Helmer's kiss was glowing on her mouth. After the third note, the cuckoo ceased. Franka released herself, but the complaisant bird began again, and when he ceased the second time, Helmer permitted his tremulous but willing prisoner to escape from his arms.

"You see, Love has far more intelligible means of expression than words; but now go on with what you were going to say: the haven is —"

Franka drew a tremulous sigh and passed her hand over her forehead. "Yes, I know — the haven is the sweet security of being protected. — Whatever may come — I am safe!"

"And the chest?"

"Oh, yes, the chest? — that is as yet firmly locked . . . but I have got the key. Treasures are in it, that I am sure of — bills of exchange, letters of credit on the great bank of the future. We two united! . . . Just think of all that we can draw upon it for all the great and little joys of life even till old age! We who are so congenial, traveling together, working together, furnishing a home together . . ."

"A home which will perhaps embrace more than two!" suggested Helmer.

". . . Living together — the joys and the sorrows that when transformed into recollections we can store away in the chest. But as yet I have not opened it. Further treasures are hidden there — I do not as yet know them . . . glowing red rubies which I have never adorned myself with. Yet, quite lately, an inkling of it has been disclosed to me by one . . ."

"One? Who?" demanded Helmer, with new-awakened jealousy.

"Who?" She smiled. Then, deliberately and in a whisper: "The cuckoo."

"Oh, thou —" And the answer was just as if the bird had again uttered his enticing call. Through the tree-tops sighed a gentle breeze which, laden with the perfume of spicy herbs and ripe strawberries, fanned and cooled the glowing cheeks of the lovers.

"Now, then," exclaimed Franka, after she had again freed herself, "let us make our plans."

"But first let me say something. . . . Also in figures — you know my weakness — and if at this moment the pictures did not rise up before me . . ."

"Then you would be no poet! But why invent at a moment when reality is so super-earthly?"

"Super-earthly certainly, but not super-cosmic. Whoever feels and makes any one feel so happy, so superhuman, works in the service of a cosmic factory. There a magnificent material is woven from star to star, from eternity to eternity out of fine glittering threads. These threads are called ecstasies, pleasures, joys, the very greatest and likewise

the very tiniest joys. Every living thing experiencing this serves as a shuttle for this loom."

"And what becomes of the material, oh, my metaphorical poet?"

"God makes his royal mantle out of it."

"Lovely!" exclaimed Franka. "Still," she added, shaking her head gently; "you employ very old material for hewing your images: God as king — in that figure I do not recognize my bold modern thinker."

"Solid material is required for hewing images. The new thoughts are for the most part as yet lacking in consistency, gaseous, so to speak; one cannot make any images out of them. But, dearest, let us not talk any more about generalities now, when we are breathing in the midst of such concrete beauty touching us both; at this moment when everything lying outside of 'thee and me' sinks into nothingness. For heaven's sake, let us not indulge in subtleties and let us not be deep! We have the right to lose ourselves in the regions of the higher folly! We have the still higher right to be — silent!"

"I will not be silent," cried Franka. "I must shout it out that I am happy, happy, happy!" And in saying this she flung her arms up into the air. "Oh how many times have I heard that word, read it, spoken it, and — to-day, for the first time, I know what it means."

Approaching voices and steps were heard. Their moment of blessed solitude was past.

Franka hastily snatched up her hat from the ground. "Come, let us go before these odious persons find us here."

"May the cuckoo fly off with them!" cried Helmer in vexation.

"But, Chlodwig," exclaimed Franka reproachfully, "how can you put such a burden on our beloved bird?"

"You are right! Holy cuckoo, forgive me!"

"Now, you know, holiness is not the right term for him. I have heard many things to his prejudice . . . he is said to have no family sentiment . . ."

"Oh, there, he does not need Philistine virtues. He is a kind of forest magician and consequently superior to civil morals."

"Just as a poet laureate is superior to provincial rulers?"

Thus laughing and jesting, they walked for a while side by side; but once their eyes met, and a sudden earnestness spread over their features; on their silent lips trembled something akin to pain; they had simultaneously discovered that between them hovered something like the spirit of consecration, awe-inspiring, something like an emanation from the mystical source of being: — Love! — something under whose breath jests and laughter seem as inappropriate as under the breath of that other solemn mystery — Death. What they had seen in each other's eyes permeated them with a thrill of devotion, and they walked for a long distance in silence; yet by their arms they still exchanged the pressure significant of affection.

Only when their path turned into a frequented place in Lucerne was this magic mood dispelled. They came to an aeroplane-hangar.

Franka paused: —

"Chlodwig, grant me one wish — let us take a little air-trip together. I have never been in an aeroplane and I should like to make my first ascent with you; and to-day especially . . . this very moment. . . . I feel a great thirst for the heights, don't you?"

"I? No. My most burning thirst you have — I mean the cuckoo has — quenched! But if it would give you a pleasure — I am ready for it. Let us fly!"

He made the arrangements with one of the pilots, and a few moments later the machine was speeding up with its passengers into the air. Franka at that moment experienced a powerful shock rather psychical then physical. Set free from the ground, hovering free, with reasonable velocity their aeroplane swept up at a height of about ten metres. It was a quite peculiar new sensation. Suddenly, however, the machine began to mount and mount; not perpendicularly, but still preserving its forward motion, until it had reached a height of some hundred metres. Franka could not repress a cry. She had the impression that the aeroplane remained still while everything else was sinking down. Into what depths fell the earth! Ever wider became the view of the country gliding away beneath them, and ever tinier little points — now trees, houses, like toys; men, like ants — juggled together on it.

Still higher went their flight. The mountains shrunk into flatness and finally everything seemed to be a plain with black streaks — the forests; a white

pool — the lake; and winding ribbons — the roads. And as Franka was not far-sighted, the whole picture swam in her vision into an empty gray plain. She recalled her dream and that terrifying feeling of being alone in space. But in sooth, she was not alone: her beloved was by her side.

"Put your arm around me," she besought him. And as soon as that firm strong support went obliquely down from her shoulder embracing her waist, it seemed to her exactly as in that dream — the blessed sense of security that one is held and protected . . . only this time with the difference, that she now knew who that one was, and she thanked Heaven that it was this one and not the other. She closed her eyes and bent her head back. She looked so pale that Chlodwig was alarmed, and bade the pilot to glide down and land them. Then Franka opened her eyes: —

"No, no, not yet — it is splendid!"

Her panic had vanished, and the peculiar fascinating intoxication of the flight through the upper air had seized her. "Do not land yet! Tell him to go in a wave-motion — up, down, up — down so that I may feel the sensation of flying, that I may know that we are flying."

"Are n't you frightened, my love, — you are so pale —"

"No, not afraid — only this new experience is so surprising, so overpowering — it is the fulfillment of a dream. Is n't it delightful?"

"Oh, yes, the human race might, indeed, be proud of the heights which it has attained, if at the same

time it had not remained so abject! Yet have patience — our watchword still is — '*Excelsior!*'"

After another quarter of an hour, in which they had their heart's content of mounting and descending, of gliding and curving, the pilot directed his aerial car to the landing-place and the two happy passengers dismounted.

They proceeded to the Rose-Palace on foot. Frau Eleonore came to meet them, as they walked along the terrace.

"At last!" she exclaimed; "I was beginning to be concerned about you — lest something had happened, Franka."

"I can't deny that something has happened to me!"

"In Heaven's name, what?"

"You will find out soon enough. Let us go up!"

She relinquished Helmer's arm and took Frau Eleonore's instead. "Good-bye for now, Chlodwig; we shall meet at luncheon. I am going to write Prince Victor Adolph now. Come, Eleonore!" And she pulled her companion toward the entrance.

Helmer bowed and went off in another direction.

As soon as she reached her salon, Franka threw her hat and parasol down and with a long, long breath sank into an easy-chair.

Frau Eleonore took her place facing her.

"Dear Franka, forgive me, but" — she was at a loss for the right words — "I know you do not like me to be preaching . . . but don't you think that such walks with Herr Helmer. . . . As far as I am concerned, it is nothing . . . I know what an old

harmless friendship means . . . but don't you think that perhaps the prince. . ."

"Oh, thank you for reminding me of the prince — I must write to him. Has any telegram come for me?"

"No, but here is a letter from the Sielenburg."

Franka took the letter and tore open the envelope. "From Tante Albertine . . . I can't make out the wriggly handwriting very well. Please read the letter for me, Eleonore, will you?"

"Willingly. But what I said just now . . . you are not vexed with me, are you?"

"Really, I did not notice what you said . . ."

"You seem very much disturbed. You have not told me as yet what happened to you."

"Later, later — please read the letter first. Let us see what the good auntie has to say."

Frau Eleonore read: —

My dear Child!

I have only just returned to the dear old Sielenburg, but I sit down to write you a few lines to tell you that we made the journey without mishap. Dear Adele is very much done up, to be sure, and quite cross; the trip did not gratify her at all. I, too, am much pleased to be at home again. Here we get so much of what we missed while away; for instance, respectful treatment by people. Here we are addressed with proper terms once again: "Kiss your hand," or, "Saving your grace" — that to Adele — or, "at your command," while the Swiss are so unmannerly; they called us "Madam," and on the train one conductor spoke to me as "a woman"! It was, indeed, out of politeness; he pushed a passenger to one side, saying, "Let the woman pass." I wanted to tell him that

I was nothing of the sort, but one can't enter into conversation with such clowns.

We had to stay another day after our "P.P.C." call on you — Coriolan got the wrong tickets, and so we heard Helmer after all. It was so strange to see Uncle Eduard's former secretary up there among the celebrities. He was so quiet at the Sielenburg, as if he could not count up to five. I could not make out what he said — it was all such a medley — exaggerated. He was always eccentric. He even presumed to cast his eyes on you. Who knows how it would have ended if I had not — for your advantage, you must know — upset his calculations and informed Uncle Eduard in good time. I am proud of that even today. Take care that he does not try his little game again; it might injure you with the prince.

Frau Eleonore stopped her reading — "I agree with Fräulein Albertine about that."

Franka shrugged her shoulders with annoyance: — "You must not be proud of that."

Frau Eleonore went on with the letter: —

You ought to hear Cousin Coriolan's opinion of Helmer — for he has a correct judgment and is a gentleman through and through. He was not at all enthusiastic over our stay at Lucerne; he declares he will never again be induced to take such an exotic journey. Really, I had a pretty good time; it was such a complete change; but I shall doubly enjoy the quiet here. What pleased me most in Lucerne was the conquest you made. Be very wise . . .

"Is there any more of that?" interrupted Franka.

"Four pages more."

"Then we will leave it until by and by: Now I am going to write to the prince. . . . Eleonore, on the whole, I prefer to tell you now: I am betrothed."

"Oh, you are?" exclaimed Frau Eleonore, her face radiant with joy. "And why did you delay telling me till now? What good fortune! Only it is a shame that he had to go away."

"My dear friend! You are under a wrong impression. Victor Adolph is not my betrothed . . . "

"Not the prince!" Her eyes grew gloomy, "Who then?"

"It is not very hard to guess."

It certainly was not difficult, and Frau Eleonore was well aware who the fortunate suitor was. In spite of the disappointment which it brought her, she was too clever, and also too well disposed to Franka to betray any dissatisfaction. To be sure, her dream of having the position of a lady-in-waiting at court was dispelled, but she concealed her disappointment: — "Chlodwig Helmer — is it, then?" she said. "Well, if you love him, Franka, I wish you joy with all my heart."

"Yes, I love him."

Half an hour later, the two ladies went down to the Toker luncheon. Franka had in the mean time written the letter to Victor Adolph: — a perfectly candid confession that she had already given her heart to another man, and, moreover, her assurance that she perfectly well realized what obstacles would have been put in the way of his life-work and his lofty position if she had accepted his impulsive and far too unpremeditated offer.

Helmer came forward to meet Franka as she entered the dining-room. The separation which had

lasted at the most about an hour seemed to them both frightfully long, and the joy of seeing each other again accelerated the beating of their hearts. They sat at table side by side as usual. After the last course, Helmer asked Franka whether they should keep their happiness to themselves for a while, or communicate the news to the Brotherhood of the Rose. "Oh, let them know about it! I should like to have it shouted over the housetops!"

Helmer stood up and tapped on his glass.

"Hear, hear!" cried Toker. "In spite of the regulation forbidding formal toasts at this table, our poet of the pinions seems desirous to offer some one's health. Well, to-day is our last meeting — give your eloquence full rein, Mr. Helmer."

"I do not intend to make a speech. What you are going to hear from me, Mr. Toker and Miss Toker, and all of you, brethren and sisters under the token of the Rose, is merely a bit of family news. I have the feeling that we all, during this delectable week, have become a sort of happy family, and therefore I hope for your interest when I tell you that this morning Franka Garlett and I were betrothed."

Gwendoline rushed to Franka and gave her a tumultuous embrace. After the confusion of the universal congratulations had somewhat subsided, Toker tapped three times on the table with the handle of his knife in order to obtain a hearing: —

"Under such extraordinary circumstances it is not only permitted, but it is obligatory upon us to offer a toast. Let us greet it as a good omen that in our serious community, gathered to enlarge the

general realm of High Thinking and thence of human welfare, two such noble hearts have joined to win personal happiness by their love. Let us greet this as an omen for the development of the coming race: if the custom obtain that the champions of the most brilliant ideas, the possessors of the greatest talents, in a word, the most splendid specimens of the human race, come together as here, and fall in love, as our highly honored new couple have done, and if they, as we hope even for this same bridal pair, increase and multiply, then, after a few more generations, even more fortunate results of careful breeding will be seen than our friend Luther Burbank has obtained with his gigantic cabbages. Therefore, proceed, Chlodwig and Franka, and found a home. That is, after all, the most beautiful and most satisfying happiness to be found on earth — however far and high our thoughts may soar and our exploits may be carried, let us provide a warm, safe place of calmness and of love to which we are all entitled.

"We men have in these days imitated the most magnificent prerogative of the birds — the art of flight. But let us never forget that other example which these masters of heights and distances give us — the nest!"

FINALE

On this final evening of the Rose-Festival, all the guests were assembled on the platform, the host in their midst. It had been determined that on this last evening there should be no long addresses by individual speakers, but that all the members of the Rose Order, whether their voices had been heard during any of the sessions or not, should make brief speeches to the audience: speeches in which, if possible, by a few short sentences, each individual should declare what was his loftiest aim in life and what he would most of all wish to have carried away as a message to his fellow-men from that far-sounding tribune. John Toker announced his programme to the public and added: —

"We regard this last evening of ours as a special opportunity for us to communicate with the outside world and to grasp in compact form the things that have been revealed to us during this Rose-Week.

"I will use this opportunity to comment on what we heard yesterday from the mouth of my young fellow-countryman. He spread out before us a whole cargo of precious gifts; he handed us a gigantic ingot of gold and said: 'Go hence and coin it.'

"Now the question arises: 'How?' Above all, a new valuation is required for the new coins which are to be minted. The whole system, the whole principle on which the social life of the present time is

built up, must be invalidated so as to give place to another system, another principle. Economical and political intercourse of men with one another at the present time still rest on robbery, imposture, fraud, distrust, unscrupulous extermination of competitors, and all this supported by the spirit of envy, which runs through the whole gamut from ill will to hatred. And do you know what we need in order to coin the new currency? — the spirit of good will. And that is certain to come. It will not create the new social intercourse, but it will grow out of the soil of the changed circumstances, as ill will flourishes in the morass of to-day.

"Inestimable is what has been given to mankind by the unlimited control of the powers of nature, creating wealth and labor; all the forces which may be spent in doing mutual harm, in mutual attack and defense, in deceiving, in betraying, in robbing, in destroying one another — all these forces are now to be free for the common task of coining that ingot of gold into current coin.

"It will be no small trouble, no brief work, to reorganize the world on this quite changed principle. Stupidity, routine, and malignity will resist for a long time; but just as radium can annihilate microbes, so will the radiant element of the human spirit, aroused to comprehension, annihilate the microbes of malignity. We shall become healthy, physically and spiritually.

"I am glad that the awakening call, the shout of the herald, rings forth from here. The tidings of triumph are to sound back from the victorious van;

a vast new country is ours; we must make it fertile; let us take possession!

"But to do so, the old methods and the old utensils are useless; we must first train the whole race till it is fit for its new destiny. Practical work must be expanded in this direction. May all those to whom our summons comes, clearly ringing, gird their loins to take hold of this work! Domestic colonization, garden-cities, hygiene along the whole line, extermination of the last vestige of illiteracy. And then, high schools will be established for the nurture of High Thinking and world-journals will be founded for its propaganda. And temples will be built dedicated to the cult of good will.

"The problem must be worked out intensively, strenuously. It is not sufficient that from here and there more ideas fly forth; ideas are all right, for they are the seed from which things spring — but actually, what now opens up before us consists already in things, and they demand to be executed: above all, they want to be grasped. I intend to seize upon them: as soon as I reach home, I intend to take measures to found the free academy of High Thinking. May this become the mint which my young friend requires for the store of gold which he displayed before our eyes.

"And now shall the knights of my Wartburg have their chance to speak. Let Wolfram von Eschenbach begin — I mean you, Mr. Helmer."

Chlodwig stepped forward: —

"I should like once more to sum up in a single sentence — if possible in a single word — the sub-

stance of my whole poetic dream, of my whole vision of the future. But here I find an obstacle in the limitations of language, for it has as yet no words for the coming things that now only project their shadows and are attainable only by longing and by forebodings. The word always comes into existence after the thing. The thing follows the conception, and this in turn is followed by the expression. For example — first there had to be a knight and the especial nature of his bearing and of his sentiments had to be conceived before the term 'knightly' was adopted.

"And thus before my vision stands the coming man — the man of the heights — *der Höhenmensch* — whose qualities correspond to the magnificent achievements which literally lift him above the clouds. What will be his characteristic quality? The term for it does not as yet exist. For it will not concern any peculiar quality already known to us, but rather a combination of qualities to which will be added possibly one never before discovered: the new combination will grow into a concept and the concept will be grasped in one word — a word which will be as current among our descendants and as clear to them as the word 'knightly' is to us. I recently spoke of 'goodness.' This word, as it is used among us, is far from expressing what my mind conceives of it. It is as yet, too, incomposite. I should want to command a term in which, besides 'goodness,' much else would be understood — distinction, gentleness, courage, good will, force, magnanimity — all in combination; and, moreover, that

soul-material which will come into activity by the new impulses of the Age of Flying — this is to be the characteristic quality of the ideal man of the future, but what its name will be, that we do not know.

"How the ideals of spiritual greatness change may be seen in a single example: Vico, the founder of the philosophy of history, who wrote at the end of the seventeenth century, — hence not so very long ago, — thus described the heroes: 'They were to the highest degree rough, wild, limited in intelligence, but possessing enormous power of imagination and the liveliest passionateness; as a consequence of these qualities they had to be barbarous, cruel, wild, proud, difficult to deal with.'

"That was the picture of hero-greatness which awakened the admiration of earlier times. This admiration has not entirely died out, but it is fading away, sinking out of sight, slowly changing into detestation. Much that is barbarous still lives amongst us, but we try to deny it. The word 'barbarous' has become a term of reproach. The man who knows no pity does not seem to us worthy of regard; the wider the range of his commiseration, the nobler is his heart. The good will of a noble soul extends even to the dumb creation. He who cannot love a good, faithful dog is not a worthy man, and whoever is cruel to an animal — how can I express my detestation of him? — well, I will quote Hermann Bahr — 'Such a person, whoever he be, I cannot regard as my kind.' In the third 'Kingdom' to which our aspirations are soaring, there is no room for barbarism.

"And now, if as our host desires, I must sum up in one phrase all that I have brought to you here, then I say: — There is no High Thinking without likewise Kind Thinking."

"The man has a touch of the feminine in his make-up," remarked some one in the audience, disapprovingly.

The next speaker was Franka Garlett. With a smiling face, betraying the gleam of her new happiness, she stepped forward: "You young girls, listen to me!" she began. "You must not be alarmed, because I repeat my appeal to you, that I am going to repeat my entire address. No, I am not going even to make a resumé of it, but I am going to say something which will interest all girls, all, all! There is a magic word which will not find one of you indifferent: if it is spoken you must listen — joyfully or woefully, with curiosity or with yearning, but never with indifference . . . and yet it is something quite simple, quite commonplace. Truly, the one whom it concerns will find it unique, will find it all-important, something world-convulsing — that world which is our own little Ego. This thing has happened to me this morning — and I cannot help myself — it fills me so — I must tell you, ye sisters of mine: — I am betrothed."

A flutter went through the hall. Among the inarticulate words also rang out distinctly, "Congratulations!" and the question — "To whom?"

Franka's face grew still more animated: "Thanks for the congratulations, and, if I heard correctly, some one asked 'To whom?' — a quite justifiable

curiosity: in such family chronicles we must find names. My chosen husband is the poet of 'Schwingen' — Chlodwig Helmer. And since he, as he told you a moment ago, has a kind feeling for every worthy little beastie, he will assuredly be kind to me."

The speaker's gayety communicated itself to the audience, and a wave of laughter swept over the hall. But now her features took on a serious expression and in altered voice she went on: — "But here another question demands to be answered: How is it that I venture to speak of my own little private affairs from this tribune where such lofty problems have been treated and when a whole world is listening to me? I justify myself thus: On this tribune I have advised the young persons of my own sex to use their brains, to learn, to see clearly in scientific, social, and political matters; even to take part in public affairs, and this has certainly awakened in many minds the notion that woman, in doing so, would suffer a loss in her affections and in her family relations; that those young girls who might devote themselves to studies and callings hitherto reserved for men alone, might be lost for love and domestic happiness. On this very spot from which I have disseminated my teachings, and before the very same listening world-audience, I now come forward to combat that erroneous notion; not in words, but as a living witness. The doctrine that 'You are in the world to share in all thought' cannot be so very perilous since the exponent of it stands here, happily betrothed."

She bowed and went back to her seat, heartily cheered by the audience.

Now, one after the other, brief parting farewell addresses were made and each speaker gave pregnant expression to his favorite and leading thought. All these thoughts, without exception, were turned by different ways in the one direction: *Excelsior!*

Then Toker announced that he would speak the final word, but first they would enjoy the usual intermission. This was employed by the speakers and the audience in unrestrained social intercourse. Here are a few snatches of conversation: —

Bruning, hurrying up to Helmer: — "Most heartfelt and respectful congratulations, my young genius! My old dream and good advice are fulfilled. You have won her — the pretty heiress; you snatched her away just in time from the prince who was so madly in love with her! Superb!"

"I shall have to withdraw my friendship from you, Franz! You have a trick of blighting everything in bloom."

"And you of talking in exalted figures. We shall not let our twenty-years-old good-fellowship drop for that! There have to be different kinds of owls!"

In a group of politicians: —

A. "Don't you find that there is a little too much preaching of morality to us during this Rose-Week? Of course we know that the destinies of the nations are not fulfilled in accordance with moral laws, that they are not conducted by ethical impulses, but that they obey economical necessities."

B. "Economical necessities? Yes, but not wholly so. One is usually mistaken if one tries to reduce complicated phenomena to one single factor. For instance: Did the crusades take place because of economic causes?"

C. "I should like to make one observation. Morality is nothing else than the result of the recognized conditions of collective life. When two or more are dependent on one another, then the conduct which promotes their welfare is elevated to the rank of a moral rule, and whatever impedes it is proscribed as immoral. The nations have treated one another unlovingly and immorally, because they have as yet no realization of their interdependence. Have you, for instance, ever entered into any ethical relationship with the inhabitants of Mars?"

In the corner where the two Russian widows were sitting with their suitors, the marchese whispering in his soft fervid Italian: —

"Annette, gracious lady, what have you done to me? The blood is storming through my veins as if I were a boy. I quite forget my advancing years. You can make me forget everything. . . . I could even renounce my ambition in order to give myself up forever to the sweet intoxication which I find in your eyes. But no, just for your sake I will get as much glory as I possibly can. . . . The man who is to be worthy of you must be like the sun in the radiance of his glorious power, the head that rests in your lap must be crowned with laurel. You, madonna, must be surrounded with splendor, you

must be raised to the highest rank so that all may look up to you in worship and envy. A world must tremble before the man who trembles before you. . . . There is no price which I would not pay, no deed that I would not venture, no multitude that I would not sacrifice relentlessly, merely to place one more pearl in your diadem, Monna Anna."

The little Baltic widow quivered under this avalanche of sweet-brutal cinquecento phrases.

Baron Gaston de la Rochère came up and joined the group, putting an end to this sentimental cooing: —

"I have just arrived. Am I very late? I don't understand the English and German speeches and the French guests present are distasteful to me. But I came to look you up, for I must share my happiness with you. I have just received by the evening mail some wonderful news from Paris. Just imagine: things are coming to a climax. The Ministry — that bunch of heretics — has fallen. Perhaps God will take his France under his protection again. The situation is so threatening that external or domestic war may break out any minute, and this is the favorable moment to proclaim royalty. My friends write me that everything is all ready, that even a part of the garrison is won over to swear fealty to the standard of the king — in short, great events are impending. The genius of my glorious country has awakened once more. Of course, you already know all about these circumstances, Marchese di Rinotti?"

"Of course, I know what is taking place and what

is proposed; but weeks must elapse before anything decisive can come about. The men in charge must reckon with the resistance of the democratic parties."

"But the men in charge will act with vigor, Marchese."

"Well, I hope so, Baron."

"Oh, gentlemen," said Vera Petrovna, beseechingly; "don't be tedious; pray don't talk politics."

Malhof accosted Franka and Helmer, who, arm in arm, were promenading up and down the corridors. "Am I interrupting the gushing fountains of love? You will have all your lives for that, and I must express my surprise and delight. I am, indeed, a very old friend and admirer of your betrothed, dear Helmer, and I have always desired her happiness. . . . How unexpectedly this came upon us! Yesterday evening, while they were manipulating with radium on the platform, we three sat so cozily together, and I had not the slightest idea of your being a bridal pair. You played your cards mighty well, you young people!"

"Neither did we have the slightest idea," protested the two in absolute sincerity.

After the half-hour's intermission, Toker again mounted the platform — quite alone; his guests remaining below in the hall.

"It is my privilege," he began, "to utter the last word in conclusion of this our Rose-Week. I feel myself compelled to express before the whole world my deepest thanks to the illustrious contemporaries

who have come at my call. And I must also thank you, my honored audience, for the lively interest and the sympathetic reception which you have accorded our offerings.

"But let us end our coöperation not with a discourse, but rather with a deed. You all know that a war-cloud pregnant with storm is rising on the horizon. We must not allow this well-worn metaphor to strengthen the current impression that we have to deal with anything elementary; we have to deal with human intentions, with the direction of human wills. These can be paralyzed by counter-intentions, by the putting forth of still stronger wills. Such an exercise of will-power has been created in our circle: in order to make it efficient, we must use the apparatus of wide publicity which is here at our service. Two statesmen, of uncontested reputation in their service for promoting the organization of peace in the Old World and the New, have drawn up a manifesto, protesting against the letting loose of the war-demon which is planned in various quarters, and at the same time pointing out the way in which the conflict may be solved in an amicable manner. This manifesto has been signed by the entire membership of the Rose Order, and at this moment is being telegraphed to all regions of the world. If the masses agree to it, it can grow into a hurricane of public opinion. I am not going to delay you by reading the message, the paper which will now be distributed through the hall contains its text. I also refrain from any explanations; neither shall I ask you to vote. Only this I will say: If this wish, this com-

mand, this storm-cry which goes forth from here is obeyed, that is to say, if the approaching contest is submitted to arbitration, and if the decision by force is given up, though, indeed, this may not prevent the recurrence of dangers in the future, and not as yet introduce a new political order — still, time will be gained. And that is the main thing in this crisis. For in order to appreciate and to apply the new treasures which of late have been won from nature, in order to cultivate the lofty thoughts to which the human mind has already begun to attain in its flights, and in order to transform in accordance with these thoughts the intercourse, the laws, the opinions of men, in a word, the whole social life, *time* is above all required. A time of peaceful, quiet development. If now a world-conflagration should break out, the development would be not only delayed, but would be set back enormously — instead of a lofty flight, we should have a terrible fall! Once more a bed for the stream of hatred and horror and destruction would be excavated, and this flood might carry away with it all that has been so painfully constructed.

"One can formulate an idea of the consequences of such a conflagration by hearing what H. G. Wells tells us in his 'War in the Air.' 'Oh, a piece of fiction, a romance of the future!' Granted, it will all come out differently. No one can take account of all the millions of interweaving threads out of which the web of the future may be woven. But the poet and the thinker, if he creates such pictures, does not at all pretend prophecy. He does not predict that

it will come in this way or that: he only shows how under given conditions things must come, if this way or that is chosen.

"So, then, we want to gain time! — time for the building-up of future happiness, time to rescue men from the woe that threatens. Indeed, the majority will not listen to the warning, the chiding, the aid-promising voices . . . these annoying calls only disturb them in their pursuits of business, work, pleasure. . . . 'Why don't the birds of evil omen leave us alone — let things take their course — what comes must come — merely let every one see to it that he does his work where Fate puts him' . . . this is about the way in which the passive resistance expresses itself; a resistance against which all those who speak the warning words constantly stumble. But they are not to be frightened away; they cannot help themselves, they must speak.

"I will use a parable: —

"Let us imagine we are on a noble ship bound for the promised land. The journey is long. There is much work and much amusement on board of the ship. It must be steered and must be maneuvered; much promenading and flirting and reading and feasting are carried on; all are busy and each one thinks his work or his pleasures highly important.

"But the ship springs a leak. If help is not afforded, the proud vessel must sink.

"It would not be difficult to get help. But the people refuse to see the leak. Is it not natural that those who do see it should not weary in calling for help? Is it not the height of unreason that the others

should leave the leak unheeded, so that they may not be disturbed in their customary pursuits, and that they should zealously devote themselves to steering and clearing the ship instead of trying first of all to save it from sinking?

"Our civilization is such a ship, my honored fellow-passengers. Its engines are working better all the time, its flags are flying ever more triumphantly, swelling out with lofty thoughts. But it has a leak — namely, the time antiquate régime of force: through this rent annihilating floods pour in and threaten to draw it into the deep! Therefore, every man on board and all hands to the repair of the damage!

"And when that has been accomplished — and it shall be accomplished! — then onward, and 'happy voyage!'"

THE END

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